

صورة المرأة في السينما المصرية عبر أربعين عاماً من التغيرات الاجتماعية والسياسية الكبرى



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عند بلوغ المرأة المصرية القرن التاسع عشر كانت مدفونة في كهف سحيق من الجهل والاستعباد والرجعية إلى أن جاء محمد علي والخديوي إسماعيل، اللذان ركزا على حتمية تعليم الفتيات، وشهد أول القرن العشرين المطالبة بحق المرأة في العمل وخاصة الطبقة المتوسطة.

على مدى خمسة عقود مرت مصر بتغييرات اجتماعية وثقافية أثرت على المجتمع ونظيرته للأمور والتغيير في عقلية المجتمع المصري الذي قبل فكرة المساواة بين الرجل والمرأة في العمل، وفي هذه المرحلة من القرن العشرين ظهرت البداية الحقيقية لصناعة السينما، ويجدر بالذكر أن هذه الصناعة بدأت على يد امرأة، ألا وهي عزيزة أمير، حيث قدمت أول فيلم روائي طويل، بعنوان "ليلي ١٩٢٧". وتوالى الأفلام بعد ذلك، والتي لم تظهر المرأة سوى ضحية مظلومة مظلوبة على أمرها، حتى فيلم "زينب ١٩٥٢"، الذي ظهر مع تغيير الظرف السياسي - قيام ثورة ٥٢. وقد أعجب مؤلف القصة بدعوة قاسم أمين إلى تحرير المرأة.

بعد ذلك ظهرت عدة أفلام يدور معظمها حول ثيمة واحدة، هي الصراع بين الفقر والغنى، فيها اختلفت صورة المرأة من فيلم لآخر كما يعرض البحث بالتفصيل.

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Her refusal indicates that she has her own orientation, as she recognized her rights and role as a human, and refused to be a female body.

imprisoned husband. However, he goes back on his word by telling her invented excuses. When Sarhan Al-Beheiri commits suicide, Mansur tries through a number of weak acts to let the prosecution think that he was responsible for the assassination of Sarhan Al-Beheiri. However, Sarhan is proved to have committed suicide, and that he was already dead when Mansur kicked him in his belly. Mansur wanted to kill him not for the sake of Zohra, but as a punishment for Sarhan's betrayal of national causes and communism which was the reason behind the suffering of Mansur himself. Zohra accepts the proposal of marriage of Sarhan, who was an example of opportunistic young men, as he joined most of the political parties before the revolution, seeking political authority to achieve unlawful goals, and preaches equality and socialism, and Zohra falls in love with him. To achieve his ends, he leaves Zohra and marries her teacher Aliya who occupies a prestigious position and receives a big salary, despite the fact that Zohra was beginning to realize the importance of education. When Mansur Bahi was acquitted from the accusation of murdering Sarhan, this indicated that Sarhan's inner contradictions brought about his end. Zohra does not become lost because of Sarhan's death; on the contrary, she went on with her plans and married Mahmud Abu Al-Abbas who changed his degrading view of women and who had a kiosk, which he turned into a bookshop. Thus, Zohra is depicted as an ambitious discreet woman who looks forward to achieving equality between man and woman. She also resists submitting to any wrong orientation, although each one of the people around her tried to win her.

- * Mansur Bahi (played by Abd Ar-Rahman Ali) : an old advocate of communism.
- * Mahmud Abu Al-Abbas (played by Abd Al-Menem Ibraheem) a seller of newspapers.

The Female image in the movie:

Although Zohra is a country girl, she enjoys a strong character, as she rebels against her grandfather. She is also well aware of the value of work, as she works as a servant girl when she arrives in Alexandria. When she meets those people there, she is able to judge their characters through their behavior with her, and hence she determines the best way to deal with each one of them. She does not like Tulba Marzuq, an ex-Bek who still lives in the past and who tries to denigrate the 1952 National Revolution, because it deprived him of his property and his membership in the parliament. He continues to criticize it through mockery. She also disapproves of Hosni Allam who neither supports nor disapproves of the Revolution, as his property remained intact after the Revolution. He invests his money in a project, but he pursues pleasures everywhere. Zohra sympathizes with Amir Wagdi who treats her with fatherly compassion. She also approves of the character of Mansur Bahi because of his straightforward behavior. He was a leftist and he represents the modern young man who joins leftist organizations. He has a weak character and he acts degenerately many times. He betrays one of his colleagues, who was imprisoned, by committing adultery with his wife who goes to him twice in the hotel. He proposes to marry her after encouraging her to ask for divorce from her

Egyptian countryman who may endure oppression for a long time, but at the end he revolts against it, and a female character is the leader of the revolt against oppression.

Miramar, 1969

Zohra

The story written by : Naguib Mahfouz

Directed by : Kamal Al-Sheikh

Starring : Shadia, Yusef Wahbi, Emad Hamdi, Yusef Shaban, Abu Bakr Ezzat, Abd Al-Menem Ibraheem, Abd Ar-Rahman Ali, Nadia Al-Gindy, and Suheir Ramzi.

Summary of the Story:

Zohra escapes from her village to Alexandria, as her grandfather wanted to marry her to a rich old man. She goes to a hotel called Miramar, owned by Madam Mariana who knows Zohra since her childhood. There, she meets a number of men:

- * Tulba Marzuq (played by Yusef Wahbi) : an ex-deputy minister whose property is under sequestration.
- * Amir Wagdi (played by Emad Hamdi) : A former journalist.
- * Hosni Allam (played by Abu Bakr Ezzat) : an idle man who inherited a hundred feddans.

The grandfather Atrees instills grudge and the desire for revenge in the heart of his grandson to such an extent that he causes him to hate Fuada, the little girl whom he used to love. The grandfather sacrifices his life for his grandson's when he protects him from a shot. The grandson grows up and makes an oath that he will take revenge. Thus, he oppresses the villagers, and bullies and usurps their property. He manages to overpower the entire village, but cannot control Fuada's heart, whom he loves since their childhood. No one at that time can face him except Fuada whom he cannot harm because he loves her. He proposes to her and her father submits. However, she refuses, and thus their marriage becomes invalid. Led by Sheikh Ibraheem, the villagers throng to express their protest. Enraged, Atrees kills Sheikh Ibraheem's only son, and this marks the beginning of his fall, as he was burnt in his palace.

The theme of the movie is the struggle between good and evil; and the heroine represents good as she renounces her love when it proves to be contrary to her values. The female image is positive, as the heroine resists the tyrant, and she may be considered as a symbol of Egypt. At that time, it was said that the tyrant symbolized Gamal Abd An-Nasir. However, the two deputies of the Minister of Culture watched the movie, but did not express their opinions. When Abd An-Nasir watched it himself, he made his famous statement "If I were so, then I would deserve to be burnt." The movie had a great influence on the people who adopted the statement "The marriage of Atrees and Fuada is invalid" said by the people of the village, as a saying. The movie also analyzed the character of the

them, she cries "I am not to blame. I am not to blame." But her cries faded away. Salama, her father, killed his daughter to remove the disgrace she attached to him, although he himself committed immorality and attached disgrace to the poor servant girl. The postman comes to know all these secrets through the people's letters which he opens. He then realizes that there are many serious problems other than his own which lie in boredom and sexual deprivation, and realizes that poverty causes the people to lead a miserable life. They try to find an outlet, which expresses itself in the form of aggressive behavior. Before Abbas attempts to do anything, the father manages to kill his daughter who becomes the victim of the vices of the whole society, rather than of her own vice. The woman, represented by both Gameela and Maryam, is the victim of the poverty, ignorance and oppression of the society.

Women as non Victimized Human Beings:

Fuada- Zohra

Shei' min Al-Khof (A Bit of Fear), 1969

Fuada

The story by : Tharwat Abaza

Directed by : Hesein Kamal

Produced by : Salah Dhul-Fuqar

Starring : Mahmud Mursi, Shadia, Yehia Shahin,
Mahmmad Tawfiq, Amaal Zayid, Salah
Nazmi, Ahmad Tawfiq, Samira Mohsen,
Wafiq Fahmy, and Hasan As-Subki

are keen to make their wives stay at home, they do not have any problem with wishing to be with the belly dancer, as they considered that sex was one of the rights of man. When the postman, who is a stranger to them becomes the only lover of the belly dancer, the villagers' alleged honor is insulted, so they go to the postman's house and siege it, asking for the belly dancer whom they stone to leave the village. Another scene presents Salama while trying to rape his servant girl, Maryam, depending on the fact that he was her master. Thus, honor is a relative issue in this movie, depending on whose honor is being violated. The crisis of Abbas is intensified because of the atmosphere of deprivation and stagnation in that society. The people of the village accuse him with their looks and the mayor tries to force him to leave his house and submits many complaints to the head of the police station. He is even noticed by the villagers when he tries to watch erotic photos which he gets from Cairo. The people have nothing to do except inhibiting other people's freedom. The officer of the police station who has been staying in the village for six years is also a victim like Abbas. He explains the people's behavior in a perceptive way. He says "They are excused. They live in burrows, so how could light reach them!" As a consequence of their reality, there happen a number of incidents which symbolize moral deterioration. Gameela degenerates when she commits immorality with Khalil despite her father's alleged moral enthusiasm. He himself degenerates when he commits immorality with his servant girl Maryam who could not refuse, as she had to obey her master. In theses examples of degeneration, the man loses

emancipation as will be the case with Gameela, the heroine of the movie, whose joining the new school in Asiyut gave her the chance to be in contact with the surrounding different world and become familiar with love. Thus, the country girl's going out of the house of her family gave her the chance not only to learn, but also to love. While the head of the post office looks for a house, one of the rich people in the village, Salama, Gameela's father, discusses the problem of his daughter's joining the new school in Asiyut, with his wife. He expresses his fears concerning his daughter's chastity which may be exposed by her stay away from her family and frequent travel. In the meantime, we see him looking at this female servant with lust, and this behavior adds an ironical feature to the society, namely sanctimony. One more feature is represented in the young villager who goes to the post office to open a saving account. He deposits a small sum of money, hoping to save the price of a gun, which he intends to buy to take revenge on the man who killed his father. In the American school in Asiyut, we discover that the reality there is not developed as it was expected to be, as the girls are all fully dressed in black as if they were in a funeral. However, love finds its way in the midst of darkness. Gameela, the young girl who has been kept from being in contact with different aspects of life falls in love with the first young man she encounters. During their innocent walks, he tells her different things and shares her dreams. Love could not exist in the village itself, as emotions and women were taboos. Abbas established a relationship with the belly dancer who did not belong to that society. Although all the men in the village

to turn the story into a two-hour long movie. The movie, however, adhered to the very essence of the original work which probed into the nature of human relationships on both their emotional and physical levels. The author chose an underdeveloped setting for his story, a village in the depth of Upper Egypt, a location that lies quite far from modern life and which is almost out of time. The economic reality there is hundreds of years backward and economic stagnation prevails. Such a reality leads to the people feeling oppressed in their lives and degraded as humans. The features of life there impact the people's daily life and their economical and emotional relationships. Those features lie in the desert environment, the severe heat, the lack of provisions, besides the lack of job opportunities and the economic stagnation, the mud houses, the lack of utilities, and the spread of uncleanness and flies. The impact of these features is reflected in the people's dealings; they become obsessed with each other and suspect each other to such an extent that they may commit criminal acts.

When Abbas, the postman arrives in this village after an exhausting trip, he asks about the house of the mayor, Abd As-Salam Wahdan. At that time, we hear a man announcing to the people of the village that an American school was inaugurated in Asiyut and that it has a free boarding section for girls, where they will be taught the principles of writing and reading and needlework. The significance of that announcement is that development was approaching the village and that girls will have the chance to attend schools and will be able to escape from their underdeveloped reality. Moreover, this will lead to their

Al-Bustagy (The Postman), 1968

Gameela- Maryam

The story written by : Yehia Haqqi

Directed by : Hesein Kamal

Produced by : The General Egyptian Institution for Cinema.

Starring : Shokri Sarhan, Zizi Mustafa, Salah Mansur, Suheir Al-Murshidi, and Seif Ad-Deen.

The movie presents three plots. It presents the social life of the village called KomAn-Nakhl in Upper Egypt. Second, it presents the dilemma of the Cairene postman who is confronted with the dull life in that village. Third, it presents a love story between a young man and a young woman from the natives of the village. Towards the end of the movie, these three plots interlace to present the human relationships in that society which is stricken by ignorance and poverty and which suffers from old oppressive customs

This movie is considered one of the most significant and elaborated movies in the history of Egyptian cinema, as it presents the Egyptian reality. The story written by Yehia Haqqi was a short one, a 15-page story published with other stories in a one volume collection entitled Dima' Wa Teen (Blood and Mud). Two of the graduates of the Scenario Institute, namely Donia Al-Baba and Sabry Musa, managed

A group of young women establish a society whose purpose is defending the women's freedom against the oppression of men and refusing the men's typical view of women as mere females. However, the movie presented this theme in a silly way, through the image of the female characters. For example, the head of the society of woman emancipation is portrayed as a naïve character who is ready to renounce her principles. Thus, she turns from a young woman who keeps repeating a group of slogans about women's freedom to an idiot without any principles. Actually she keeps repeating her principles out of pedantry rather than real conviction. The other female character is the girl who studies house management (played by Magda). She abandons this field of study and joins the society, and when she marries the man whom she loves, she tries to apply what she learned in the society to their life. Thus, they agree to divide the house chores between them. However, the husband falls behind and becomes very angry and even beats her. She commits suicide by setting herself to fire. ? She had earlier read that the Buddhist priests did the same to express their protest against the American intervention in Vietnam. Although the movie tried to adopt the issue of woman emancipation, it actually degraded the woman, as it portrayed her as silly, naïve, and pedantic. Instead, it could discuss the theme of the woman's political rights. For example, the heroine of the movie admired the hero because he managed to knock down a bunch of men, a reaction which explains how silly that woman and her friends were. Other movies, however, were much better in this respect.

members of his family as if they were slaves. Unlike degrading portrayal of the character of Zannuba, this image contributed to portraying Ahmad Abd Al-Jawad's character with its different aspects.

The year 1968 witnessed the production of a large number of movies which constituted a trend based on pure amusement, weak plots, and affected comedy. The female image in all of them was that of a beautiful mischievous young girl, and the focus was mainly on exposing her as a female. Among these movies are : Shahr Asl Bidun Iz'ag (A Honey Moon Without Disturbance), Mutardah Gharamiya (A Chase of Love), Shanabu Fil Masyada (Shanabu Trapped), Hawa' wal Qird (Eve and the Monkey), Baba Aiz Keda (Dad Likes It), Adweia, Gezeret Al-Ushaq (The Island of Lovers), Az-Zawag Ala At-Taraeeqa Al-Hadeetha (Getting Married in a Modern Way), Afreet Miraty (My Wife's Sprite), Helwa wi Shaqia (A Beautiful and Mischievous Girl), Miraty Magnuna ... Magnuna ... Magnuna (My Wife is Mad ... Mad ... Mad .(

When one of the movies, namely, Hawa' 'Ala At-Rareeq (Hawa' on the Way) tried to discuss a serious subject, it was presented in a deformed way.

Hawa' 'Ala At-Tareeq (Hawa' on the Way), 1968

It discusses the issue of equality between man and woman as was stated by one of the characters in the movie.

The movie depicted only three locations of those included in the story : Ahmad Abd Al-Jawad's house, the palace of Rashid Bek in Abbasia, and the floating house where the corrupt group used to spend their time. The female characters in the movie include Amina, Ahmad Abd Al-Jawad's wife and his daughters, besides Aida, the educated girl who belongs to the aristocratic class, Zebeida, the belly dancer, and Zannuba. Amina represents the typical oppressed Egyptian wife who cannot help but obey her husband blindly and fulfill all his wishes and desires. She brings her daughters up on the same values. Aida the aristocratic girl likes to attract young men. She encourages Kamal to befriend her and he loves her, but later he discovers that she did not love him. The main female character in the movie is Zannuba, a prostitute who works with Zebeida. Ahmad Abd Al-Jawad has a love affair with her, but when she asks him to marry her, he refuses and breaks off relations with her. However, she marries his son, Yasin. Zannuba was depicted in a very superficial way; all the scenes presented her as a mere belly dancer, without presenting any of the human aspects of her life. The focus of the movie was on this aspect of her life to such an extent that the typical behavior of the belly dancer was stressed even in normal situations, such as when washing her clothes, when eating, when riding a coach, and even when going in the street as she stops among a crowd of people and starts dancing. Thus, all the scenes involving Zannuba were obscene ones and degrading to the character of a woman. Ahmad Abd Al-Jawad had a double character. At home, he is the stiff head of the family who treats the

in the hands of the advocates of backwardness who plot against both Ihsan and Ali Taha. Qasim Bek also exploited her beauty, while Ali Taha was the only one who did not try to exploit her. He tried to apply what he studied in the university; he tried to encourage her to confront corruption. However, she submits to the corrupt values of her parents and her husband who only sought their own benefit. Thus, Ihsan was a symbol through which Naguib Mahfouz wanted to convey a message : Cairo has become rotten, so you better seek a "new Cairo" which is the original title of the story.

There are two more female characters which were secondary ones. The first is the corrupt princess (played by Bahiga Hafiz) whose palace was a center for corruption, amusement , and licentiousness, in much the same way as the palaces of the Ottoman's Sultans. She does not speak Arabic, and she only speaks it with transliterated Latin alphalets, and she had good relations with the figures of the forces of occupation. The other was the minister's wife (played by Aqila Ratib). She finds her husband in bed with Mahjub's wife, Ihsan. The husband however, manages to calm her, and her anger is subsided, but she unwillingly submits.

Movies Produced After Egypt's dealeat in 1967:

Qasr Ash-Shoq, 1967

The movie dealt with one aspect of the story of Qasr Ash-Shoq, by Naguib Mahfuz, namely the sexual concern.

revolution. Thus, it presents the horrible situation in Cairo during the reign of Ismail Sidqi. It also presents a panoramic view of a certain period of time, telling the history of that period so that we may get to know about the hoped society of socialism at that time. The story of the movie, which was written by Naguib Mahfouz, is told through the elements of the panoramic view with its quarters, villages, palaces, students, women, political organizations, and the offices of ministers. The heroine is a poor beautiful girl called Ihsan Shihata. She had many dreams for the future but her social circumstances made her weak and exposed. Ihsan's young soul and sweet dreams could not thrive in the midst of that corrupt society. So she suffered and became lost, and is only left with her female beauty which makes her fall prey to dirty hands.

The woman as a symbol:

As usual, Naguib Mahfouz chooses Cairo as the location where his stories take place, and here he uses Ihsan as a symbol of Egypt. As a beautiful girl, all people around her want to reach her and all of them have the same goal. Her father (played by Tawfiq Ad-Diqn), who is a procurer and her mother (played by Na'eema As-Sagheer) who was a prostitute during her youth, exploit her beauty to provide for her brothers and sisters. Mahjub Abd Ad-Daim also exploits her to attain his goals, as he adopted a philosophy based on accepting the society and its corrupt values as long as this will be beneficial. Thus, he took Ihsan as a means to achieve his ends, and after that he becomes a tool

journalist, the second 'Ali Taha becomes a political activist and opposes the government and calls for the adoption of socialism, thus exposing himself to persecution at the hands of the police. The third is Mahjub Abd Ad-Daim, an opportunist, whose poverty leads him to accept a job in return for marrying Ihsan Shihata, who was once Ali Taha's beloved, and who had a love affair with Qasim Bek, a deputy minister who later becomes a minister. The secret relation is exposed when the minister's wife goes to Mahjub's house to find her husband in bed with Mahjub's wife. Mahjub had a conviction that he was living in a dirty society and that the person who would act immorally would be the winner. The movie ends with Ali Taha distributing his papers among the people coming out of the mosque. He then hides among the people, so the police who wanted to assassinate him, failed to identify him.

Criticism of the movie:

This movie is characterized by a distinctive feature, namely its being the first movie to represent the socio-political trend in the Arab cinema. Moreover, it is a realistic movie which analyzes and studies an important period of our history. It presents some of the aspects of the period in which corruption and feudalism prevailed. It presents this theme through the stories of a variety of characters, including poor people, tyrannical people in authority, deprived lovers, and activist young men. The national events were included in social events which were in direct connection with the then status quo, before the 1952

propose to her. For her, sex satisfied both her physical and psychological needs besides being a means of earning money. Eventually, she was arrested in a suspected house, and her brother Hasanein was summoned to take her. He was shocked, and when he decided to kill her, she spared him this trouble and committed suicide. Feeling lost, he also committed suicide. Nefeesa realized that she would be killed, so she decided to rid herself and her brother of the disgrace she attached to the whole family.

That was the first time a poverty stricken woman was depicted in this human way. Although she scarified her life, committing suicide was actually a kind of relief for her. Thus, the viewer of the movie feels sad for her and feels that she did not deserve death, although death was a relief for her suffering. In another movie, *Al-Qahira 30* (Cairo 30), we encounter the story of Ihsan. Unlike Nefeesa who was a poverty stricken ugly girl, Ihsan was beautiful, but was led into prostitution by the people around her, each of whom was motivated by a different purpose.

Al-Qahira 30 (Cairo 30), 1966

Ihsan shihata

It is the story of three university students who live during the thirties. One of them, Ahmad Bedeir, works as a

Hasanein said to her, and replied to him in French. The mother (played by Amina Rizq) represents the typical Egyptian helpless mother at that time, who could not help but praying for her sons and daughters and striving to dispose the affairs of her family. Nefeesa is the real heroine of this movie. A girl at that time had either to be of a noble family or to be beautiful to attract suitors. Nefeesa realized quite well that she had none of these qualities, so whenever her mother prayed for her, asking God to send her a suitor, she would reply by saying that it was impossible. However, her brother, Hesein who sympathized with her, used to tell her delicate words. She was a character who deserved pity, as she suffered a lot due to the bad circumstances, which she did not cause to exist. Although she suffered from poverty with her family, she was a positive character, as she worked as a dressmaker at a time when this job was looked down upon by the society. During that period, girls used to prepare themselves to be wives and their mothers used to teach them how to be good housewives. Nefeesa had a love affair with the grocer's son (played by Salah Mansur), a naïve, cowardly young man who had a weak character as was indicated by his behavior with her, his lustful looks, and his haste when they met and he took her to bed. Nefeesa submits to his desire, as she has the same desire. By that time, she had realized that she became an old maid. When her lover told her that he would not marry her, she became a prostitute, as a form of self punishment. She felt that she was ugly and very low and that no one would

Clot Bek and is eventually arrested. Another, Hesein, works as a clerk after obtaining an intermediate degree, to support his family. The third son, Hasanein, was a student in the military academy and graduates as an officer and joins the cavalry. Nefeesa, the daughter, works as a dressmaker, but then becomes a prostitute. The movie's end is a tragic one, as Nefeesa commits suicide after she was arrested. Her brother, Hasanein, wanted to kill her, but she was quicker, so he also commits suicide to be relieved from disgrace.

The movie blames it on the deteriorating society which did nothing to protect such a family from loss.

The Female image in the movie:

The female characters in this movie are the mother (played by Amina Rizq), the daughter, Nefeesa (Sanaa Gameel), the neighbors' daughter (Amaal Fareed), the young woman who belonged to the upper class, and the daughter of the school clerk. Concerning the last two characters, they were typical of their time, as their main concern was waiting for a suitor. The school clerk goes very far in seeking a suitor for his daughter as inviting Hesein to his house and lecturing him on the great value of marrying at an early age. While playing backgammon, he tells him "It is your turn." The young woman who belonged to the upper class looked as if she were not Egyptian. She could not understand the words of flirtation

- 1-Thuraya (played by Mimi Shekeeb) who represents the upper class, and who plays an important role in facilitating the transactions through bribery, and she represents the women of the royal palace.
- 2- Hosna (played by Tahiyya Carioca), a woman who trades in the market and who supports Hareedi to confront the tyrants of the market.

However, the role of the woman is secondary, as the main plot is the struggle between Hareedi and the tyrants of the market, while Hosna's main concern was marrying Hareedi.

Women as Victimized Human Beings

[Nefeesa- Ihsan- Gameela- Maryab]

**Bidaya Wa Nihaya (A Beginning and An End),
1960:**

Nefeesa

The novel presents an important period in the history of Egypt, namely the period prior to the World War II. The novel was first published in 1949 and its events date back to 1936. The story starts with the death of the father whose family consisted of his wife, three sons, and one daughter. He left them nothing, so they were obliged to sell their furniture to support themselves. One of the sons, Hasan, leaves school and becomes a bully and drug smuggler in

arrives in the city main market of green grocery, which is controlled by a group of merchants, who were also very poor when they first arrived in Cairo. Each one of them manages to make a fortune; and the movie presents their ways in trading and making transactions and winning auctions. They are always in a state of conflict and strife for power and mastery over the market. When Hareedi first arrives in the market, he works as a porter, replacing a donkey. However, he encounters some honest people who encourage him to do his best and help him against Abu Zeid, the master of the market until he manages to expose his dishonesty and he is eventually arrested and sent to prison. However, Hareedi emulates Abu Zeid in his dishonest ways until Abu Zeid is released. The two rivals meet and wrestle, but the police arrive. However, ABu Zeid regains mastery and the previous state of affairs prevails, and again, people wait for a time when they can rid of the tyrant.

The movie reflects the period of the royal reign in Egypt and the corruption that prevailed in Egypt. It also heralds the revolution of July 23rd, by presenting the revolt of the poor people in the market against the tyrannical merchants.

The Female image in the movie:

There are two female characters:

Eternity), 1952, the main theme of the movie is the inability of the wife to understand the nature of her husband's work, while the beloved represents the meanings of devotion and sincerity. In the movie "Amaal" the hero marries a belly dancer, whereupon he is disinherited, while in "Dahab" the central figure in the plot is the girl "Dahab" rather than her mother. "Ghaltit Al-'Omr" (The Lifelong Fault), 1953, presents an arrogant wife whose husband deserts her and enters into a relationship with Nadia, the singer. "Ish-hadu Ya Nas" (Be Witnesses People), 1953, presents the story of a man whose morals change when he becomes rich. He indulges in all kinds of unlawful pleasures, and is encouraged by the belly dancer with whom he lives. In "Al-Hob Al-Makruh" (Unwanted Love), we have the story of a man who loves another's wife and attempts to lead the husband to have a love affair with a belly dancer whom he employs to seduce him. The same theme is reiterated in the movie "Darb Al-Mahabeel," 1955 which tells the story of a group of friends who are separated because of money. We have two female characters : Saniya, a prostitute whom they all curse and Khadijah, whose main concern is her wish to marry Taha.

Al-Fitwwa (The Bully), 1957

The main theme of the movie is striving for earning one's living. Hareedi, the hero, is an upper Egyptian who

novel, the author expressed his rebellion against the long established customs in the country which inhibited the young man or woman from expressing their feelings towards each other, or even telling their families about their feelings.

This movie was the first movie which was partially multicolored, as 400 meters were manually multicolored in Paris. It was also the first movie, whose musical sound effects were especially made for it, by the heroine Bahida Hafiz. The movie was reproduced in 1952, with different actors and actresses. The events were modified to suit the then period of time. Also, the character of Hamid, played by Siliman Naguib, was added to the plot.

Movies Produced After Zeinab

Most movies which were produced after Zeinab had a stereotypical theme, namely, the conflict between the rich and the poor. The heroines are mostly poor, and there is also the character of the wanton woman who is usually a belly dancer who tries to tempt the hero and make him abandon his family. In the movie Ghadab Al-Walidayn (Discontent of Parents), 1952, the belly dancer (played by Samiha Tawfeeq), the disobedient son (played by Mohsen Sarhan), the poor daughter (played by Shadia), and the infidel wife. In "Lahn Al-Khulud" (The Melody of

The Female image in the movie:

- 1- The movie was produced in 1952, the year which witnessed the National Revolution in Egypt, on July 23rd.
- 2- The silent movie "Layla" which was displayed in November, 1927 in the Metropol cinema, was the first long movie. However, it was another movie that marked the real beginning of the Egyptian cinema, namely the silent movie "Zeinab" which was displayed in April, 1930, and which was the eighth movie among the silent movies displayed during that period.
- 3- The significance of this movie "Zeinab" lies in its being the first cooperation between fiction and cinema by producing a movie based on a literary work.
- 4- When the novel "Zeinab" was published in 1912, it was received with great welcome among the youth at that time, as it was the earliest Egyptian novel. Muhammad Kareem who was sixteen years old at that time admired the novel very much wished to direct a movie based on the novel. He told Yusef Wahbi about his enterprise and he helped him achieve his goal by directing the silent movie "Zeinab".

At that time, the author of "Zeinab" Dr. Muhammad Hesein Heikal, was motivated by the call to the emancipation of woman by Qasim Amin, which claimed the woman's right to choosing her lifelong partner. In this

- 3- The savior is again a man, who saves her from committing suicide then from captivity.
- 4- Mentioning the name of the scenarist.

Zeinab, 1952

A romantic movie based on a realistic story. It is a miserable love story between Zeinab, a village girl and her cousin Ibrahim who is from the same village. There is another desperate love story between Hamid, an educated youth and the son of the landlord, and her cousin Aziza. Hamid could not express his love to her because of the customs. Moreover, he married another girl. Zeinab who was considered the most beautiful girl in the village used to work in the land of Hamid's father, and Hamid loved her, but his love to her was unrequited. She was in love with her cousin Ibrahim.

Again, the customs interfere with this love. Her family marries her to a rich young man called Hesein, and she accepts in submission, although she did not have any feelings towards him. After that, Ibrahim enrolls in the army and travels to the Sudan and Hamid leaves for the city seeking forgetfulness. Zeinab lives with her husband only with her body, as her soul was always with her lover. She leads a miserable life until she falls ill with pneumonia and eventually dies.

Nadia, 1949

Nadia was a teacher who devoted her life to raising and supporting her brother and sister. Her brother becomes a fighter pilot in the air force, and dies during the 1948 war. Nadia becomes extremely sad and resorts to drinking, and is therefore dismissed from the school where she works. After that she works as a nurse and travels to Palestine to participate in tending the wounded. There she encounters Medhat, who turns out to be her deceased brother's colleague and falls in love with him. He saves her from committing suicide and again saves her from captivity at the hands of the Jews. Thuraya, her younger sister falls in love with him as well; and Nadia sacrifices her own happiness for her sister's. However, she discovers that her sister did not love Medhat and that she wanted to marry anyone, as she falls in love with another officer. Nadia becomes happy and is reunited with her lover.

The Female image in the movie:

- 1- Here we find the typical theme of devotion to the family, but this time, it is a sister. Nadia devotes herself to her brother and sister then accepts to sacrifice her love for the sake of her sister.
- 2- The woman is again portrayed as negative and waiting for coincidental solutions.

The Female image in the movie:

- 1- The producer of the movie, Lotus Company, attached a statement to the advertisement of the movie, which reads : Whoever lives for himself only should not have come to life. The company made that slogan one of the messages the movie conveyed.
- 2- The story emphasizes that meaning, as the mother strives to make her daughter happy, and conceals the truth about their poverty.
- 3- Praising the typical devoted Egyptian mother who dedicates herself to her family. The image of woman here concentrates on the aspect of motherhood, rather than the woman as an integral human being. This is a typical image in most Egyptian movies. The woman is considered positive only when she devotes herself to her family, while her emotions as a human being are mostly disregarded.
- 4- The hero, who was once a criminal, finds an example in that devoted woman, and he turns into a kind person to make her and her daughter happy (one more example of devotion, copied from the heroine.)
- 5- As usual, the savior is a man, although it was a woman who devoted herself to her daughter, and whose example that man copied.

That idea was strange to the Egyptian cinema in the beginning, but it was reiterated in other works by Kamal Silim, Yusef Wahbi, Ahmad Kamil Morsi, and Kamil At-Tilmisani during the period 1939-1944.

- 2- The movie presents a positive image of women, as the heroine decides to operate the factories of her father instead of selling them.
- 3- The movie employs a song "We are workers and we are energetic in doing our job" indicating the status of the Egyptian workers.
- 4- Belittling the idle people who became rich through inheritance and showing them as being of no benefit for their society, and stressing the value of work and connecting it with the woman.

Al-Hanim (The Lady), 1947

The story of a mother who strives for earning her living, to support her daughter. She roams around streets in the cold weather, selling Arabian jasmine. She deprives herself of the pleasures of life for the sake of her daughter, and does not tell her about their livelihood. When the irony of fate is about to expose her, a man appears in her life. He was a criminal who repented and became a kind person, and he, along with them, leads a happy life.

3- The movie has a rape story.

Ibn Al-Balad (Our Countryman), 1942

Starring : Aziza Amir, Mahmud Al-Miligui, Dawlat Abiad, Bisharah Wakim, and Mohsen Sarhan.

The heroine is Fat-hiyah who belongs to the middle class and her father is the owner of a number of factories. He marries his daughter to Azmy Bek, a rich man who is idle and licentious. He, along with her brothers Mohsen and Tawfiq, spends his time attending parties and gambling, wasting her money until they become indebted and their property is put under sequestration. Fat-hiyah decides to operate the factories instead of selling them, and at that time, she encounters Mahmud whose workshop in Alexandria was destroyed during one of the German raids. Her husband divorces her, because she became acquainted with a man who belongs to the working class. The relationship of Fat-hiyah and Mahmud grows stronger.

The Female image in the movie:

- 1- The movie attaches much importance to the value of work and workers through a woman. Previously, Aziza Amir presented a positive image of a wife who works in her husband's workshop, among a group of men (in a movie entitled Al-Warsha (the workshop), in 1940).

Rabab, 1942

Rabab (played by Mary Queeni) lives with her step-mother who treats her badly. She escapes and meets Ihsan (played by Ahmad Galal), the son of Tahir Pasha, who tries to rape her. During that, his car veered out of control and overturned, and he died. Rabab changed her name to Nagwa when she was informed that Tahir Pasha decided to take revenge on her, as he thought she was responsible for his son's death. After two years, by coincidence, Tahir Pasha saves her from drowning without both of them knowing each other. He admires her and marries her; and Rabab discovers that he was Ihsan's father, but decides not to tell him as she had a son by him. Abd Al-Jabbar who knew her story tries to blackmail her. When he tries to rape her, she sends Sa'diya, an actress who had a love relationship with Abd Al-Jabbar to ask Tahir Pasha for help. When Tahir Pasha is informed, he is shocked and he refuses to go and help her. He also refuses to allow her to see her son. However, Guda, a friend of Abd Al-Jabbar, tells Tahir Pasha the truth, so he forgives her and they are reunited and they lead a happy life with their son.

The Female image in the movie:

- 1- The daughter suffers at the hands of her step-mother who represents the typical image of cruelty and bad treatment of her step-daughter.
- 2- Another character is the wronged daughter who later becomes the wronged wife. Thus, the woman is portrayed either cruel or weak and submissive.

poor. Zaki leaves his cousin Hosniya (played by Amina Rizq) after having deflowered her. His brother Lam'i (played by Yusef Wahbi) who had been abroad returns after having completed his studies. Ibrahim (played by Mahmud Al-Miligui) marries Hosniya and they have a daughter, Bamba. Ibrahim doubts whether Bamba was his daughter, so he deserts Hosniya. Lam'i tries to kill Zaki but fails to, and is sent to prison. After he is released, he looks for his sister and tries to get a job. Hosniya works as a dancer in night clubs; and her daughter (played by Rawhiya Khalid) works as a singer. Lam'i finds his sister and Hosniya encounters Zaki, who decides to take care of his daughter who was sick. Ibrahim also encounters Hosniya after having been looking for her and wants to be reunited with her. Lam'i decides to rid Bamba of her suffering; he strangles her and flees. Hosniya and Ibrahim are reunited and they start looking for Lam'i.

The Female image in the movie:

- 1- One female character is Hosniya, the woman who commits immortality; and she works as a dancer in night clubs.
- 2- Another is Bamba, the illegitimate issue, who falls ill and at the same time works as a singer, and eventually dies as a victim.

The Female image in the movie:

- 1- The movie employs a plot based on the ascension of the poor hero and the fall of the rich antagonist.
- 2- The poor hero experiences the ascension, while a poor heroine does not experience the same thing.
- 3- Class distinctions are presented through the typical rich pasha and his daughter, and his wife who is her step-mother. The title of the movie is very revealing.
- 4- The poor hero takes revenge on the woman who belongs to the upper class while the reverse situation does not occur.
- 5- In love stories, the woman is the beloved who sometimes offer sacrifices for the sake of love. Stories which are based on the youth striving for making fortune show the hero, never the heroine, as the one who plays the main role in achieving success.

Awlad Al-Fuqara') Children of the Poor), 1942

Fu'ad pasha refuses to help his brother who lost his money in the stock market, whereupon his family becomes poor. Zaki leaves his cousin Hosniya (played by Amina

- 1- The heroine is portrayed as an educated young woman who obtains a scholastic degree then joins the Institute of Arab Music.
- 2- The movie shows the European influence, as it is considered the first attempt at producing Aida, as an Arab Opera.
- 3- The fans refused this trend.
- 4- The movie shows a great interest in female singers as heroines, to make use of their celebrity.
- 5- New details concerned with the story writer, the montage, and the mixage and other techniques were mentioned in this movie.

Bent Zawat (A Girl From the Upper Class), 1943

Ibrahim, a youth who holds a diploma in engineering, and who is the son of the overseer proposes to Samia, the daughter of the pasha, but she refuses his proposal of marriage. Ibrahim is shocked and decides to take revenge. The pasha loses his wealth, while Ibrahim becomes rich and becomes a member in the parliament. When the pasha falls back on Ibrahim, the latter stipulates that he marries his daughter. This time, she accepts and Ibrahim acts arrogantly with her, but she endures and supports him as a sincere wife when he sustains some afflictions. At the end she explains to him that her refusal to marry him previously was in spite of her.

of the theater. Meanwhile, she falls in love with a young man who belongs to a rich family, but whose mother refuses his proposal of marriage to her because she was a singer. Her brother also falls in love with a girl who belongs to a rich family. The story ends with the triumph of love, art, and youth.

The Female image in the movie:

The singer who loves the rich young man, whose family refuses to let him marry her; and the end of the movie represents the triumph of the poor class.

Ayda, 1942

Umm Kulthum plays Ayda, a poor girl whose father works in a rich man's estate. The rich man's son falls in love with Ayda, who was a student preparing to obtain a certificate from the high school. After she obtains the degree, Siliman Bek (played by Siliman Naguib) who admires her voice encourages her to join the Institute of Music. This movie tried to make use of Umm Kulthum's voice in singing opera, as the movie was a modern treatment of Opera Aida, which was written by the famous musician Verdi. However, it proved to be a big failure.

The Female image in the movie:

Salama Fi Kheir (Salama in All Rights), 1937

It is the first Egyptian comedy, on the artistic level at its time, which achieved a great success. Its main theme is religious and ethnic tolerance, which was a main characteristic of the social life in Egypt in the first half of the twentieth century.

The Female image in the movie:

The roles played by women were secondary ones, as in:

- 1- Sattuta : the typical Egyptian wife at that time, played by Fardous Mahammad.
- 2- Jihan : a rich figure from the high class, and a schemer, played by Raqya Ibrahim.
- 3- Nahid : Jihan's secretary, and the innocent beloved of Prince Qandahar, played by Rawhiya Khalid.

Intisar As-Shabbab (Triumph of Youth), 1941

A lyrical movie which tells the story of a poor young singer and his sister who is also a singer, who strive for earning their living. After they get jobs in a theater, they are dismissed, because the sister refused to entertain the goers

punished for her betrayal; and when she decides to return to Fikry, he refuses her, so she commits suicide.

The Female image in the movie:

The heroine is depicted as a beloved who is punished because of her renunciation of her love.

Widad, 1934

The advertisements of the movie show the patriotic spirit at that time. We can read the statement : the clothes used in this movie were made of cloth manufactured by Misr Company for Spinning and Weaving and Misr Company for Manufacturing Silk. This movie is a typical melodrama; and the story of the movie takes place during the Mamluk period during which the slave trade was still practiced in Egypt. It presents a love story which takes place between Widad (a female slave) and her master Bahir (played by Ahmad 'Allam), whose property was looted by high way robbers and he becomes indebted. After that he decides to sell all his property to pay his debts. Thus, he sells his beloved, Widad and the two lovers are separated. However, he later manages to regain his property, Widad included.

The Female image in the movie:

The heroine is a slave and the main thing she does is her love for her master.

Muhammad Kareem, Siliman Naguib, Tawfeez Al-Mardafly, and Zebeida Al-Hakeem. This group includes the cast of actors and actresses and the director. The theme is the same as that of Cinderella and La Dame Aux Camelias. Some critics such as Samir Farid think that the significance of the movie lies in that it represents a turning point in the history of Egyptian movies, as it marked the beginning of professionalism in the production of movies. It is also considered a cornerstone in the cinema industry, as it was the first movie to be displayed in all Arab countries and achieve high gains that exceeded doubles of the expenses of production. This is mainly attributed to the fact that 'Abd Al-Wahab was a very famous singer.(4)

The Female image in the movie:

The heroine of the movie, Raja' played by Samira Khulusi, was a beloved who did not have any role except her being a beloved. That was the reason behind Umm Kulthum's refusal to play Raja'.

Dumu' Al-Hobb (The Tears of Love), 1935

It was also a lyrical movie and was directed by Muhammad Kareem. It tells a love story between Fikry (played by Muhammad Abd Al-Wahab) and Nawal (played by Nagat Ali). It portrays Nawal as a deceptive woman who deserts Fikry without any reason and marries a rich corrupt youth, Hilmy (played by Siliman Naguib). Nawal is

Notes:

- 1- The presence of the Brazilian archaeologist and his niece symbolizes the British occupation of Egypt. When that man mocked Ahmad and his folk, the latter who symbolizes the people of Egypt retorted upon him.
- 2- Portraying the rich class as oppressing and exploiting of the poor class, through Ra'uf Bek. Although Layla was the victim, she had to suffer the consequences of her sin, and although she played the role of the beloved, she alone had to suffer because of her sin. The omitted scene of the praying woman indicates that the society wanted that woman to suffer as a consequence of her sin, and the commission of Comstockery represents the society. No doubt that the patriotic aspect and the influence of the 1919 national revolution were the main reasons behind the strong emphasis on the importance of values.

Al-Warda Al-Beida (The White Rose), 1933

A lyrical movie which belongs to the melodrama type. It was directed by Muhammad Kareem and produced by Primavera (Egypt and Paris); and was displayed in December 1933. It was the first movie where the name of the story writer was mentioned. The story was written by a group of people including : Muhammad Abd Al-Wahab,

- 3- What gains did Egypt get from this movie ?
Nothing, because it is merely an emulation of the foreign movies.
- 4- Concerning the actors and actresses : They did not perform well, as it was the first time for them to face the camera; and the same applies to the director who did not previously direct any similar works either in the theater or in the cinema. However, he expressed his admiration for Aziza Amir in two situations, and disapproved of the performance of Bamba Kashar and advised Mary Mansour to retire.
- 5- Concerning the shooting and the quality of the scenes : the scenes were not bad, but the shooting was dark and the actors' faces were not clearly visible.
- 6- The conclusion : After a year and half, there is not anything in the movie that deserves approval, but at the end, I hope that Aziza Amir would accept my criticism without any disapproval.

After the writings on the movie stopped, after one month of the display of the movie, Aziza Amir addressed a statement to both the fans and journalists, which was published in An-Naqid Magazine in issue no. 10, in December, 1927. She thanked the fans and journalists and admitted the shortcomings of the movie and thanked those who outlined them and promised that she would try to avoid all such shortcomings in the future.

board. He also approved of the boldness of Aziza Amir. In his criticism of the movie, Widad Bek outlined the most important motive that made it incumbent on critics and journalist to encourage that movie, namely patriotic zeal. All writings at that time were motivated by one thing which was the importance of establishing the cinema industry in Egypt. This was eight years after the 1919 revolution.

The critical article written by Ahmad Salah Ad-Deen Nadim was an elaborate one, compared with the rest of articles. His article was entitled : "Layla : the first Egyptian movie" and It was published in As-Sabah Magazine on two pages of its issue no. 61, issued on November 28th, 1927. Nadim started with the importance of acknowledging the sacrifices of Aziza Amir and the immensity of the production. After that he emphasized the patriotic aspect of the movie by saying : "The production of an Egyptian movie is basically a patriotic matter, because it helps promote the Egyptian cause in Europe and in the U.S., besides the east. Then he divided his article in a number of points concerned with the movie and stressed the importance of criticizing the movie, so that the movies that will follow will be of a better quality. His article was divided as follows:

- 1- A summary of the movie.
- 2- Significance of the movie : although I tried hard to grasp the significance of the movie, I could not understand anything.

end of the movie was changed upon the request of the representative of the Paramount Company, an American company. The end of the movie was changed into a happy one to help promote the movie in the U.S. In issue No. 115, issued in February 21st, it was reported that the same movie was displayed in Alexandria after modifying it again so as to make it conform with the Egyptian Arab customs and traditions.

Criticism of the movie:

The criticism of movies at that time was not that serious, as it was not based on artistic concern. Most critics were mainly of the theater critics and some of them were journalists who were interested in the theater. Abd Ar-Rahman Nasr wrote a critical article entitled "The earliest Egyptian long movie" in which he approved of the movie, overlooking its shortcomings which he considered as inevitable in a work of art done for the first time. He also blamed it on the commission of Comstockery in the Ministry of Interior, as the commission hindered the production of the movie and omitted one of its scenes. The scene was that of a woman who was on her deathbed and who was praying to God to save her. It seems that the objection of the commission was based on that the dying woman had committed immorality and that she did not deserve prayer. Another critic called Edward Abdu Sa'd wrote favorably of that movie in As-Sitar magazine, in issue no. 9, issued on November 28th, 1928. His article was entitled : the first Egyptian star to flash on the cinema

in the desert where a rich man called Ra'uf Bek lives. There is a girl called Salma who belongs to the same village. After Salma's father dies, the mayor of the village takes her in his custody. In the meanwhile, Ra'uf Bek arrives in the village and admires Salma greatly. He tries to seduce her by offering her money, but she relucats. There is another girl who lives in the same village, namely Layla. She falls in love with Ahmad, a Bedouin who used to work as a tourist guide. At that time, a Brazilian archaeologist arrives in the village, accompanied by his niece. This man mocks Ahmad and his folk, but Ahmad retorts upon him, and the girl admires him a lot, but his love for Layla was very strong. The Brazilian girl invites Ahmad to go to Cairo and there she manages him to forget all about Layla who becomes greatly disappointed when she hears the news. Thus, she becomes lost, as she was pregnant. A villager called Salim tries to take advantage of this situation by threatening Layla that he will expose her secret, as he happened to hear her talking about it with another woman. When he does so, Layla becomes an outcast and suffers humiliation. She found no one who accepted to give her shelter except Salma, the Bedouin. When she decides to leave the village, a car runs over her. The car driver was Ra'uf Bek who stopped and carried Layla to his house where she delivered her baby. The summary concludes with the statement : thus she left her baby in the hands of Ra'uf and his sister, and passed away.

However, in issue No. 107, issued on November 24th, of the same magazine, under the news of cinema and night clubs, there was published some news that the catastrophic

Layla, 1927

The movie "Layla" which Aziza Amir produced and starred in, in 1927 is considered the earliest long movie. Through the press, and the published criticism of movies, the art of cinema criticism was established. For instance, we can find an advertisement published in Rosa Al-Yusef Magazine in issue No. 103, issued in October 27th, 1927. The advertisement occupied half the second page, and it was as follows:

Isis Film

Layla., the first Egyptian long movie

Displayed for the first time in the Metropol Cinema

From 16 to 22 November

Lady Aziza Amir

The first to work in cinema

There was an earlier production by Aziza Amir of a movie entitled Nida' Allah (call of God) which was not displayed, as its producer described it as a group of disconnected pictures. Aziza Amir made a great effort to repair that movie but all her efforts were in vain, so she thought of producing another movie, namely "Layla" and decided to include two parts, which were repaired, of the previous movie into it.

A Summary of the movie:

Rosa Al-Yusef Magazine published a summary of the movie in issue No. 106, issued on November 17th, 1927. Through the summary we are introduced to a small village

- 5- The departure of foreigners from Egypt created a large number of vacancies for the nationals, particularly women.

The Egyptian press was the battlefield where women contended to obtain those achievements and privileges. Over the first half of the twentieth century, the press played a basic role in proposing the issues of woman urging the people to change their long established conceptions concerning women.(2)

During this period, more specifically, as early as the twenties of the twentieth century, the cinema industry was introduced into Egypt. The success achieved by some Egyptian movies at that time attracted the theater stars to work in the cinema. However, the social view concerning woman's work in this field inhibited women from joining it and actors remained the main cinema cast at that time, but this did not affect progress of movie production. There was a parallel artistic trend in press as there appeared some journals and magazines whose basic theme were the news of movie stars, directors, and producers. The contestations held for new actors and actresses, whose results were usually published in magazines, played an important role in promoting those magazines.(3) It is worth mentioning that the cinema industry in Egypt was started at the hands of a woman, namely, Aziza Amir.

impact on the long-established customs and traditions. The most significant events were:

- 1- The breakout of World War I and the obligatory recruitment of a hundred thousand Egyptian youths, which led to some women going out to work to support their families.
- 2- The effective participation of women in the 1919 Revolution which gained them a high status in the society which started to consider woman as man's partner in the same homeland.
- 3- The Egyptian girl proved competent in the field of education, and the first to obtain a degree was Munira Thabit who obtained a degree in law from France, in 1925, and was the first young woman to work as a journalist. The same year witnessed the graduation of another Egyptian young woman called Nagla' Badr from the faculty of pharmacology in the U.S., and in 1929, the earliest group of young women joined Cairo University. One of them was Dr. Suheir Al-Qalamawi who obtained the B.A. degree in 1933. Thus, excellence in education gave those young women a chance to become working women.
- 4- The numerous immense privileges women won after the revolution of July 1952, which marked a new phase in the mentality of the Egyptians who started to accept the idea of woman's work since that time.

enhancing her status. The twentieth century witnessed the beginning of claiming the woman's right to work. The woman achieved a notable success in education and the turning point in the emancipation of woman was the admission of girls in the first official university in Egypt, Cairo University, in 1928. At that time, woman's work was not acceptable among the rich people. However, the women who belonged to the poor classes were obliged to go out of their houses seeking means of earning living. Those women worked in mean jobs such as working as servants in houses, harvesting cotton, agriculture, weaving, or as midwives and sellers in markets. The women who belonged to the middle class represented the focus of concern, because they represented the majority of the women in the society. Those women looked down on woman's work as it was then associated with the poor classes. It was also thought that it leads to delaying the marriage prospects on the part of girls, who used to wait until they had finished their study. There was one more conception connected with woman's work, namely, a working woman is usually less efficient in managing her family affairs and less devoted to her familial life. A more striking conception was the connection between woman's work and improper behavior: a woman who works spends a considerable time outdoors and has to deal with men, and sometimes she has to stay away from her family as in the case of teachers and nurses.

This state of affairs lasted for about five decades. However, Egypt witnessed a lot of changes during those five decades which had a strong impact on the society and its traditional views. The events at that time also had an

human being having the right to education. Later, there came another enlightened ruler, namely Khedive Ismail, who was well aware that the woman had to take part in the social development. His wife Hishmat Akhit Hanim Effendi bought a palace at Syoofiyah and turned it into a school which was inaugurated in January, 1873 and employed her authority to convince the Egyptians to send their daughters to it at a time when the social values were beginning to change.(1)

Other factors helped that state of affairs to exist. At that time there appeared some enlightened cultured people like Sheikh Rifa'ah Al-Tahtawi, who wrote a book entitled : Takhlees Al-Ibreez Fi Talkheez Bareez (Extracting gold in Reporting about Paris). In this book, he expressed his wish that the Egyptian woman would enjoy the same status and freedom in her society as the French woman, to be able to practice and make use of her mental faculties. There were also other people like Sheikh Muhammad Abdu, Qasim Ameen, and Sheikh Mustafa Abd Ar-raziq, and some others who spent some time studying in Europe and who returned with some European thoughts. Another important factor was the advent of Syrians and Lebanese people to Egypt. Those were more familiar with freedom, and introduced many aspects of modern life into Egypt, such as theater. They also helped develop the movement of translation and they issued a number of magazines concerned with women, such as Al-Fatah (the young girl) in 1892, Al-Firdaws (Paradise), and Mir'at Al-Hasna' (mirror of the beautiful girl). Those magazines defended the woman and her role and emphasized the importance of giving her her rights and

The Image of the Egyptian Woman in the Egyptian Cinema over Forty Years of Major Socio-Political Changes in Egypt

(*) By Dr. Sahar Farag

By the advent of the nineteenth century, the Egyptian woman had been buried in a deep cave of ignorance, servitude, and underdeveloped ideas, and denigrating customs which made her a female slave on whom the society looks down, or a servant who was devoted to the other's benefit. She was nothing more than a means of pleasing the man and taking care of the family. That was her world in which she had to live.

The chaste woman in the sight of the society, at that time, was that whom her family locked in her family's house during her childhood, and who was familiar with nothing of the outside world during her youth, and who once entered the house of her husband would not leave it until her death. Such was the status of the Egyptian woman in the society until the time of Muhammad Ali, at whose hands the Egyptian society received the first cultural impact. Muhammad Ali's plans of reform included not only the sphere of governmental institutions, but also education and scholarships, including education of girls, which marks the early beginnings of giving weight to the woman as a

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أفلام الصرخة من وجهة نظر نسوية

د. سحر فراج (*)

ظهر في تاريخ السينما العديد من الأفلام التي ترسم صورة المرأة، خصوصًا مشاكلها وصراعها مع الرجل، ولكننا لا نستطيع أن نقول إن هذه الأفلام قد عبرت بشكل صريح عن مشاكل المرأة.

ومن خلال إجراء فحص شامل لهذه الأفلام لم أجد ما يعبر عنها كإنسانة ومخلوقة من الدرجة الأولى. وقد اخترت أن أطلق مسمى "أفلام الصرخة" على هذه الأفلام التي كانت مشكلة المرأة هي المحور الأساسي، وقد تألفت قائمة الأفلام محط الدراسة من:

- ١- "أريد حلاً" ١٩٧٥: ٥- "يوم مر ... يوم حلو" ١٩٨٨:
- ٢- "ولا عزاء للسيدات" ١٩٧٩: ٦- "يا دنيا يا غرامي" ١٩٩٦:
- ٣- "أحلام هند وكاميليا" ١٩٨٨: ٧- "أسرار البنات" ٢٠٠١:
- ٤- "زوجة رجل مهم" ١٩٨٨: ٨- "سهر الليالي" ٢٠٠٣:
- ٩- "أحلى الأوقات" ٢٠٠٤:

يعد فيلم "أريد حلاً" أول صرخة استغاثة أطلقتها المرأة، "و لا عزاء للسيدات" تدور فكرته حول حياة امرأة مطلقة في مجتمع يعاقبها على ذنب لم ترتكبه، أما "أحلام هند وكاميليا" فتمودج للفيلم النسوي لمخرج رجل، يدافع عن المرأة إلى أبعد الحدود ... وهكذا تتوالى الأفلام في إطلاق صرخات متتالية متنوعة على مدار تاريخ السينما المصرية الطويل.

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مصادر "أحلى الأوقات" ٢٠٠٤:

- (١) أمل راغب: "أحلى الأوقات ... فيلم رائع إلا قليلاً"، ٢٠٠٤/٥/٤،
القاهرة: جريدة القاهرة.
- (٢) طارق الشناوي: للفن فقط "أحلى الأوقات مع أحلى الأوقات"، ٤/٢٣/
٢٠٠٤، القاهرة: مجلة روز اليوسف.
- (٣) ماجدة موريس مقعد بين الشاشتين "البطلات الثلاث وكارتون تون"، ١٢
٢٠٠٤/٤/، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (٤) هاشم النحاس: "فيلم رائع لولا وجود سامي العدل"، ٢٠٠٤/٥/١٨،
القاهرة: جريدة القاهرة.

way of dealing with life with all its contradictions. It also investigates their lifestyle and how they avoid facing difficulties. One of the movie's praiseworthy aspects is that it avoided melodrama in some scenes which usually tempt directors to include it. Another praiseworthy aspect is its feministic one which sneaks into the incidents, represented in defending women's rights to enjoy friendship and personal independent ambition that men enjoy in our Arab countries. The failure of Salma's meeting with her father and teacher affirms that joyful moments are those moments we make. Surely, they do not belong to the past which we cannot restore. Joyful moments do not entail working life out, but trying to change it to the best. This is exactly what the three women do, especially Yosriyah who convinces her husband that a bouquet of flowers, for a woman, is better than half a kilo of kebab. In addition, joyful moments also come when we determine our choice. Doha prefers to marry Tareq and work with him in his office for typewriting, as she become completely convinced that she does not fit as an actress.

Thus, the heroines get unmasked while they recall their past memories. They then come to know their reality and reconcile with themselves. They also reconsider their lifestyle and relations with each other so that the past might influence the present. The director skillfully refers to that anonymous thing in one of the scenes, where the heroine replaces her lenses with her glasses, which she used to use during her childhood. This symbolizes the interrelation between the past and the present without separating them, so as to keep the character's psychological balance.

him for advice, he encourages her to go on with her plans of emigration. This intensifies her confusion, and she becomes torn between alienation and belonging. This gives weight to the value of friendship as a remedy for her dilemma. She breaks all barriers and fetters and returns to her stepfather to find out that he is the one who sends her the messages. By so doing, he wants to make her stay home and give up her plan of emigration. She also intercommunicates with her neighbor, the master of marionette, whom she loves.

According to critic Amal Ragheb, she says : "This movie belongs in fact to the world of women, nostalgia, and era of good songs. It tries to help people escape their alienation, enjoy life, and seek reconciliation with oneself, because after the passage of time, one will usually describe the joyful moments of today as the nicest moments one ever lived."(Ragheb, 1)

Critic Magda Moris says that "This movie poses the question "What are the nicest times? " Are they the joyful moments ? Or are they the moments when one finds out facts ? It is up to spectators to understand it the way they like. It also presents a new form of friendship among women. It is not limited to discussing the value of friendship among girls but it goes further to tackle some related human values."(Moris, 1)

The most important element is that the movie did not go beyond the traditional Egyptian social system, which makes it special and unique and gives weight to its themes and images. The movie revolves around the idea of people's

past through an old photo with her schoolmates Yosriyah and Doha. She starts her investigation journey to recall her past days at school and that silent loving teacher. She finds out that the past was beautiful while the present is boring.

Yosriyah has given birth to two children and she is pregnant. She does not appreciate her marital life, as her husband always ridicules her when she asks him to buy her some flowers on her birthday. He (the husband) says to her that kebab is much better and useful. This is their only source of disagreement, as she desires to live a romantic life while her husband does not appreciate this, and she wants to be free, but her husband thinks that he owns her since the day they got married.

The third character is Doha, who is completely distracted between marrying Tariq, her fiancé, and her dream of becoming a movie star.

The three of them meet to recall their joyful past memories. They begin their journey of self realization. Doha tries to become an actress; but she finds out that she is untalented. Yosriyah reunites with her husband after expressing her refusal of his continuous threat of divorcing her. He, at that moment, brings her a bouquet of flowers and a half kilo of kebab, as he has learned not to satisfy only himself but also his wife.

Salma travels to Alexandria accompanied by her two friends to look for her father. She becomes alienated and miserable when she discovers that her father recognizes her with difficulty and does not care much about her, as he is a tepid man and he has married many times. When she asks

relations with others except for her mother, who was her partner throughout her past and present life. When her mother was separated from her father, she moved with her from Shubra to Al-Maadi. Incidents reveal that her mother's marriage came to compensate for her miserable life with her former husband who was irresponsible and poor. It is also a great social change in their life; they moved from the bottom to the top of the social order. Such a drastic change caused the girl to lose psychological balance, making her present separated from her past.

The director skillfully utilizes another factor, that is, the accessories, which play a significant role in expressing the characters' feelings. We may notice the contact lenses the heroine always puts. Thus she changes her eye color and she would not be recognized by her acquaintances, and these lenses act as a wall which separates her from her past life. In a unique scene we see how the mother is concerned with the contact lenses, before her death, as if she wants to emphasize the separation between her daughter's promising present and her miserable unpleasant past. The director employs accessories on another occasion, when the mother died while she was trying to get her scarf which clung to a tree, by using a ladder. She lost her balance and fell to the ground dead while the scarf still clung to the tree. Then we see how her husband, who is a doctor, accepts her death and we see the scarf in his car on the seat opposite to his.

Salma receives some anonymous messages as well as some flowers and a cassette of Mohamed Mounir. She tries to find out who the sender is. She doubts that it is her stepfather or her neighbor. She finds herself recalling the

Ahla Al-Awqat (The Best Times), 2004

The movie starts with Saad Abdul Wahab's song:

The world is like a feather flying in the air⁴

It flies without wings.

Today we are together⁴

But where will we be tomorrow?

It ends with the same song but sung by Mohamed Mounir, which is a sign of our nostalgia for the past. It affirms that only good songs can last with along the different generations.

The movie has four female characters. Hala Khalil, the director, starts with the character of the mother who has a daughter; Salma from a previous marriage. It seems that the mother enjoys her relaxed kind of life as she begins her day with reading the newspaper while resting on a sofa drinking a cup of tea. We will notice that her husband loves her, but unfortunately these quiet moments of contemplation will soon end, as she will die in an accident.

Incidents go on to see Salma who lost her mother living with her stepfather Rabie, which makes her situation very critical. Salma is not like her mother; she neither leads a tranquil nor a happy life. She is alone with no friends. And she feels alien going through her life without a definite goal. She is introvert and cannot establish any considerable

مصادر: "سهر الليالي" ٢٠٠٣:

- (١) أحمد صالح: صفحة السينما: "سهر الليالي"، ٢٠٠٣/١٢/٢٥، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (٢) أكرم السعدني: "سهر الليالي"، ٢٠٠٤/٣/٣٠، القاهرة: مجلة الكواكب.
- (٣) رامي عبد الرازق: "سهر الليالي ما تعلمته الإمامة حين تعلمت الهديل"، يناير ٢٠٠٤، القاهرة: مجلة السينما.
- (٤) ماجدة رشدي: "آه يا سهر الليالي"، ٢٠٠٣/٧/١٨، القاهرة: مجلة صباح الخير.
- (٥) أمل فوزي: "صح النوم يا سينما"، ٢٠٠٣/٧/١٨، القاهرة: مجلة صباح الخير.
- (٦) محمد صلاح الدين: "مشاكل الشباب العائلية في سهر الليالي"، ٧/٣/٢٠٠٣، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (٧) محمود قاسم: "الحب في سهر الليالي"، ٢٠٠٣/٧/٦، القاهرة: مجلة نص الدنيا.
- (٨) محمود علي: "عطر الكلمات: سهر الليالي ومولد مخرج جديد"، ٧/١٩/٢٠٠٣، القاهرة: الإذاعة والتلفزيون.
- (٩) سامي حلمي: "الواقع السينمائي سهر الليالي لماذا؟"، ٢٠٠٣/٧/٢٤، القاهرة: مجلة شائتي.
- (١٠) نيفين الزهيري: "سهر الليالي يخرج بالسينما المصرية من النفق المظلم، ويتجه نحو الأوسكار"، ٢٠٠٣/١٢/٢٧، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.

enjoying the same song, this does not entail their regret or end of their problems. This movie does not present a tale and a solution for a problem, but it presents some complicated intimate social relations full of problems and troubles. At last, all people care for these relations to continue despite all fancies, desires, and dreams.

Critic Ahmad Saleh adds that the peak of the artistic and the intellectual briefing is shown in the final scene as they all attend the wedding party of the two lovers. They were all dancing and tossing the groom with his elegant tuxedo up in the air as most friends do in weddings. However, in this movie, this tossing has a significant meaning as it symbolizes the future of this new marital life. It would be elegant and well measured the same as the tuxedo and the wedding dress of the bride but it will always be in the air. Moreover, the appearance of the businessman in the wedding party is an evidence of the continuation of worry and trouble in the newlywed couples. Everyone of them still has his flaws and knowing each party of the flaws of the other would not consequently lead to separation or divorce but life will go on. (Saleh, 1)

openly that their problems had no solution or if the movie makers' pessimistic viewpoint regarding marriage or the relation between sexes were revealed, it would be a severe shock for the spectators. Therefore, the movie prefers to stand midway, to compel the spectators to ponder on those problems.

The characters have also contributed to that success. They come to seem cinematic figures with elegant good-looking appearances, which attract spectators to imitate them. However, a careful evaluation of any of them reveals them to be real characters having many flaws. In brief, the movie comes to reveal the tragic flaws of each of the characters preserving their self-concept, so as not to shock the spectator. It goes without saying that Sahar Al-Layali (*Restless Nights*) secludes its characters and tales from the social conflict and characters' complexes; however, it does not deny its understanding of such elements. This is only to shed more light on how complicated marital life and the relation between sexes are.

As well as this, we cannot neglect that the movie's title came to be named after a song. It embodies the most joyful periods in life; namely, bachelorhood, away from the opposite sex. In fact, this movie commiserates bachelorhood as if it were to emphasize the impossibility of coexistence between sexes, although it comes to establish the opposite in one of its scenes. Newlywed couples often get the notion of rebelling against their lives and may curse their choice, but always keep loving the other party. Their rebellion goes through a vicious circle regulated by a strict social law. Although they dance with one another while

insists to lead a free life, which derived her to think of taking a decision that might change the whole course of her life.

We can see that Habib cares to a great extent about the characters of the heroines paying less attention to the male ones. He gathers them through a very integrated dramatic unity in a chalet owned by one of them to spend a night recalling their past memories and thinking of their distorted present life. Watching the boisterous waves, they began to search for the reasons for their confusion, separation, and inability to intercommunicate with their wives, whom they chose to accompany them throughout the whole course of their lives.

Dealing with the issue in hand very seriously and respecting the spectators' mentalities is the main reasons for the success that Sahar Al-Layali (Restless Nights) achieved. In addition, the movie is neither traditional nor shocking. In other words, it manages to cause some sort of confusion on the part of the spectators. This leads the movie makers to introduce moderate solutions, which contribute to making some of the ideas of the movie vague developing a feeling of uneasiness. This happens indirectly, which contributes to intensify the spectator's perception of the movie.

The ending scene comes to be deceiving; it is traditional and trivial on the superficial level. The four couples appear dancing with one another showing their happiness for reuniting with each other. However, a minute examination reveals the reality. The problems that causes their separation are still there. However, if it were said

Sahar Al-Layali (Restless Nights), 2003

Tamer Habib, the scriptwriter of this movie, chooses three wives to embody his work, giving the male characters a second importance through their reactions, and their recalling the past memories. The first wife "Beri" knows about her husband unfaithfulness, which cannot be ignored anymore. Despite the fact that she is in the seventh month of pregnancy and that she has another child from him, she realizes that she should react against that.

As for the second wife "Moshira" she resorts to dreams to relieve herself of dissatisfaction with her husband's inability to satisfy her sexual desire. He is satisfied with performing his marital duties very routinely, which leads her to think seriously to be unfaithful to him.

The third wife "Farah" is depressed because of being abandoned by "Ali" the man whom she once loved, to marry Moshira. As a result, she decided to marry his friend "Amr" who is poor and who is less than her in status, to avenge herself. She suffers from depression and the desire to avenge herself, which creates gaps in their marital life, which causes the husband to abandon her after she unintentionally harmed him.

The fourth female character in this movie, Inas, is a divorcee having a free life with the young engineer Sameh. After a period of time, she tries to get married to him legally. However, he rejects the mere idea of marriage and

- (١٠) ماجدة مورييس: مقعد بين الشاشتئين: "الجنس في حياتنا"، ٢٠٠١/٤/٥ ، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (١١) نهاده إبراهيم: نقد سينمائي: "أسرار البنات مواجهة اجتماعية فكرية متمرده"، ٢٠٠١/٥/٢٩، القاهرة: مجلة الكواكب.
- (١٢) محمود علي: "عطر الكلمات: أسرار البنات"، ٢٠٠١/٤/١٤، القاهرة: مجلة الإذاعة والتلفزيون.
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مصادر: "أسرار البنات":

- (١) أحمد صالح: أخبار السينما، فيلم مصري يدين المجتمع، والبريئة التي وقعت في الخطيئة، ٢٠٠١/٤/١١، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (٢) أمل فوزي: "شاهدنا الفيلم بعقولنا"، ٢٠٠١/٤/١٨، القاهرة: مجلة صباح الخير.
- (٣) أمل فوزي: الفيلم جريء وواقعي تمامًا، ٢٠٠١/٤/٢٥، القاهرة: مجلة صباح الخير.
- (٤) حسان الليثي: سينما "أسرار البنات" من الواقع إلى الشاشة الكبيرة، ٢/١١/٢٠٠٠، القاهرة: شاشتي.
- (٥) حسام حافظ: "أسرار البنات" تناول مشكلة ياسمين بأسلوب غير مستفز، ٤/٤/٢٠٠٢، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (٦) حسام عبد البصير: "أسرار البنات" عودة إلى السينما الجميلة"، ٢٦/٣/٢٠٠١، القاهرة: جريدة الوفد.
- (٧) سمير فريد: أسرار البنات - السينما المصرية تواجه قضية مصر الكبرى، ١١/٤/٢٠٠١، القاهرة: جريدة الجمهورية.
- (٨) كارولين هولي (مراسلة الـBBC): "تنوير يستحق الوسوسة"، ٢٠/٥/٢٠٠١، القاهرة: مجلة أكتوبر.
- (٩) فتحي العشري: سينما نعم ... سينما لا: "أسرار البنات" يثير المشكلات"، ٤/٤/٢٠٠٢، القاهرة: جريدة الأهرام.

The movie does not tackle the issue of girls' secrets but it condemns rendering them as such. It denounces the reason why we perceive life affairs and understand them as taboos. If the relationships between the members of a family were healthy and transparent, such a tragedy would not have happened.

of sex, which unexpectedly attacks us and ends our childhood. If the scenes before the appearance of the strips were to pose the question, the whole movie plainly expresses it through the flashback technique. The flashback technique employed in *Asrar Al-Banat* (Girls' Secrets) not only refers to the past incidents but also pinpoints their reasons. Flashback scenes include the sexual relation between Yasmin and Shadi as well as girls' mannerism at school, where half the girls wear the veil, which reveals the dissension among girls, and their swinging between seriousness and joyfulness. They also refer to the girls' reception of the reproductive systems lesson in science. There are some scenes presenting the middle-class streets in modern Cairo where mess prevails. Such a mess is represented in the taxi driver who refused to carry Yasmin's family. It is also reflected in people watching each others' deeds and failing to show respect for the individual freedom.

This movie sheds light on the way Shadi was brought up in the absence of his father who works in Saudi Arabia. The scene of the end is very touching as all characters, who contribute to Yasmin's tragedy, gather. For Yasmin, all of them represent her inner conflict. What is ridiculous indeed is that both Khalid and Awatif do not assimilate the lesson, as they increase their control over their daughter causing girls' secrets to sink in deep darkness. Yasmin then appears wearing a white dress as if she were being carried to her silent grave once again. She lies on the bed in so much the same way as a dead body condemning all the factors that contributed to her tragedy

As this movie gives its characters the chance express secrets openly, it also embodies all forms of subjugation and suppression through that bearded doctor and the uncle who exploit religion to exercise their authority. The doctor stands for the government as well as the religious groups that strive to obtain authority and become an alternative ruling power. Meanwhile, the uncle represents the family and tribe, which stand for power and social suppression.

On the other hand, we find out that Yasmin's aunt and her husband succeed to have more control over their life because of their education and high income, as they work as professors at the university unlike Yasmin's parents who are employees. Thus, the former is safe from the family's and the state's suppression, but not to a great extent. We can say that they try to realize their ambitions depending on their mentality and moderate solutions. However, we cannot get rid of the feeling that also this family may collapse at anytime. They become afraid lest what happened to Yasmin should happen to their daughter. The aunt starts to ask her daughter whether she knows about Yasmin's case, and the daughter herself asks about the swimming pool and is it wrong to wear the swimming suit while Yasmin is forbidden to. Spectators of *Asrar Al-Banat* (Girls' Secrets) will develop some sort of confusion and uneasiness. If the movie were about virginity, circumcision, or the moral and religious strictness, it would be easy for spectators to express either approval or opposition. The movie has underlying difficult questions, whose answers are impossible to reach. It questions the individual blind submission to the community's customs, and the meaning

Ali goes on saying, "In this movie, I call for reviewing the social and historical circumstances and finding out proper means for establishing the concepts of the middle class that are about to vanish. We have to reach a certain method to prepare ourselves for a vast variety of ideas that would spread rapidly and which we will not be able to stop. Through the shock in the movie, I wanted to say that we can never be safe by simply keeping alienated." (Ibid)

One of the exciting scenes in this movie is when Yasmin weeps while praying, as her shock was beyond her understanding. She decides to resort to Allah; however, her feeling of weakness makes her unable to even recite the opening chapter of the Koran, as she feel that her sin prevented her from communicating with Allah. Powerlessness is the main feature of this movie and this scene in particular presents it in a concentrated way. It revolves around the characters' confusion and their inability to intercommunicate or accomplish anything, which are the solution for all their troubles.

Adolescents in our society are somehow like Yasmin; they live in a society perceiving sex education as taboo. When one of the MPs called for sex education at schools, extremists agitated considering this matter the same as teaching pornography. The movie is in fact calling for facing this problem openly and courageously, as the biology teacher fails to explain the male or female reproductive systems in the class because of shyness, lack of seriousness, and unawareness of the value of science and knowledge.

alive after fourteen centuries of the advent of Islam honored women and made gratitude and kindness to one's mother the way to Paradise. Samir Farid considers the story of this movie as an objective correlative to religious fundamentalism, which establishes that the religious ruling in this case is applying the Islamic punishment prescribed for fornication, without proper considering the reasons for such a mistake.”(Ibid)

This movie tackles the circumstances that made this girl a victim not a sinner. It does not justify her mistake; however, it warns against a culture which is about to spread throughout the whole society, and which might lead to many tragedies similar to that of the girl.

Director Magdi Ahmad Ali says “As a member of the middle class, I am much worried about its decline. The disunion among the members of that class is the main reason for the crisis we suffer nowadays. The Egyptian woman is the cornerstone of the union among the members of any family since very long; but such a position took to diminish in the few past years. I used to say that the deterioration of women's position indicates the decline of the whole society. Therefore, I should support and defend her against any destructive ideas that would lead to her backwardness.”(Opcit 1)

A careful reading of the story would reveal that both the author and the director did not condemn anybody, but they held the social and historical circumstances that originated that moral code responsible for what happened to the girl

family's permission. When his colleague tells him that he contradicts the decree of the Ministry of Health and he will report that case, the doctor says that adhering to religion is more required than committing to decrees, as if what he did is instructed by the Glorious Qur'an.

In his critique in Al-Gomhoreyya newspaper, Samir Farid says that this movie tackles the great issue of religious fundamentalism in Egypt in the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries that revived once more after two hundred years since Mohammed Ali's time. "What do I mean by 'fundamentalism' here is adhering to the principles especially by the middle class; however, the religious fundamentalism whether in Islam, Christianity, or Judaism as well as the 'civil fundamentalism' if one would say, such as materialist fundamentalism, means adhering absolutely to principles without applying this to reality. Therefore, it is more correct to call it 'extremism' or 'standstill'. Moreover, away from the image of the extremist terrorist that depicts him bearded with a white garment, and holding a chain, Azza Shalabi, the author, managed in her first movie to find out the objective correlative equivalent and employed it in presenting the issue of religious fundamentalism. This came through the story of a young lady from the Egyptian middle class, as the relation between men and women is of central importance in religious fundamentalism, and since fundamentalism means here extremism and standstill, it reverts to the practices of the pre-Islamic era." (Farid, 5) He who carefully examines the practices of the majority of Muslims in Egypt and other countries will feel that we are about to bury girls

feelings because of their perpetual inner feeling of defeat which resulted from their strict understanding of religion and social customs that overestimate males and calls for rights regardless of any due duties.

Khalid, who fears everything, cannot see through the camera lens anything except the pane of glass which prevents him from discovering his own or other people's internal feelings. He suffers from his strict economic conditions, so he is always gloomy and silent.

As present incidents intermingle with past ones, we can notice how alienation and inhibition affected the development of the young 'Yasmin' that girl who was always watching everything in silence and who was fascinated by the songs of Mohamad Fawzi. This came to take place through dealing with some details of her life, though minute but very important, in the house, street and school as well as the rare moments of going out to parks. At the end, one can perceive that the members of this family suffer from their inability to intercommunicate with each other. This family adheres strictly to the social moral criteria and fears even the advent of satellite channels, not caring about life as much as caring about building a tomb. Thus, they were mainly occupied with how to keep that scandal secret. They do not care what happened to the girl and how she conceived. Their religiosity is superficial and does not reflect the profound principles of Islam. This is also represented by Yasmin's uncle, who imposes wearing the veil upon his young daughters, and the doctor, who discovers that Yasmin was still virgin and operates a circumcision while she is unconscious, without her or her

The mistake that these parents committed was that they failed to take care of their adolescent daughter through proper dialogue and enlightenment, which is not in line with their religious enthusiasm. On the other hand, the other parents keep have channels of communication with their daughter to overcome the problems and troubles of adolescence.

Asrar Al-Banat (Girls' Secrets) probed, in an unprecedented way, into the Egyptian society, whose families lack intercommunication between their members. This became a cause, and in the meantime a result, of this state of affairs and a lifestyle which prevailed in the whole society. We blame each other and reject the other without trying to approach the other, be that other a class, a doctrine, a custom, a viewpoint, or even sentiments.

Illegitimate children have become the time bomb that heralds bad consequences. However, the movie rapidly put an end to such a problem by letting the baby die to ease the audience's senses. In my opinion, the director resorted to such a solution in order not to let the audience be absorbed by the baby's destiny while the issue is the lack of intercommunication between the girl and her parents. It is incredible that when the girl first got her menses, the mother felt shy.

The movie goes on to shape the true image of the rest of characters after pregnancy came to be known depending on the viewpoint of Yasmin, the only victim of the mentality of her parents, who represent a large class in the society. Khalid and Awatif are always willing to hide their

her secret to anyone, the doctor who examined her punished her by operating a circumcision surgery, motivated by his ideas about sex, which he believed to be religious.

From the very beginning of the movie we see the birth of Yasmin. The quick scenes show that she grew up and started asking her parents many questions about life and how God created people. When they felt unable to answer her, the strips started to appear. It is as if this movie was trying to say that since God provided us with answers then why do we shun them?

The flashback of incidents reveals how this family is stable on the economic level, rather than on the social and psychological ones. When the parents leave their daughter alone in the house, they talk to her on the phone to make sure she is all right. However, when they are at home, they fail to speak to one another. The mother believes that she brought up her daughter properly but, as the movie goes on, we perceive how separated they are from each other. The mother felt that she is the victim not the one to blame for her daughter's pregnancy and giving birth to a child. The author chose a mother who although she was religious, she enjoyed the characteristics of a typical eastern woman, regardless of her being Christian or Muslim. The issue in hand is not confined to a specific religion, but it addresses the whole society most of whose individuals preferred to adhere to some conservative beliefs. They fear the mere mention of the word sex and try to protect their girls with all possible means instead of helping them understand the laws of life and differentiate between right and wrong deeds

joyful occasion and merriment prevailing in the place. There is also a mark on his forehead, which indicates that he performs many prayers. He was taking some photos with his camera, while the signs of disapproval of the youths' choice of songs. His wife, Awatif, on the other hand, puts on the veil indicating that she had the same ideas of her husband, which suggests that they are in a state of harmony. Yasmin, the third member of this family, is a secondary student who sets alone never cared for by anybody. The dialogue tells us that she failed, for the first time, to pass the exam of one of her subjects, which might indicate the existence of some susceptible secret in her life that she tries to hide from everybody.

The second dramatic group is dedicated for the family of Nadia, Awatif's sister. She, like her husband Ahmad, is cheerful and enlightened. A true happiness can be perceived through the scene of their celebration of their daughter's birthday. Nada is a secondary student who is upright and mature to a great extent.

Yasmin fell in love with Shadi, their neighbor's son, and conceives out of an illegal sexual relationship with him. In fact, this movie does not tackle the issue of pregnancy out of wedlock for it exists and will last for long and had been dramatized in many other works. Neither is it a dramatization of the relationship between a young man and lady, who were like a brother and sister in the same school, before they joined different secondary schools. The main issue of this movie is the fact that the whole society continued to decline instead of developing to find itself in a state of fear of everything. While the girl feared divulging

Asrar Al-Banat (Girls' Secrets), 2001

The director Magdi Ahmed Ali dared, for the first time in the history of the Egyptian Cinema, to tackle such a critical issue. He dramatized it in a very unique way that let the audience feel it as if real. Thus, he introduced a great lesson very smoothly to both young and old people. His movie managed to embody deeply our double standards regarding sex; that is, desiring it and fearing it. It (the movie) furnishes us with the opportunity to reevaluate our relations, which is the most obvious aspect of art. Art does not mean to present an abstract direct example; it, however, tries to understand the mutual relations as well as our own selves.

Ali says, "I am presenting a family that assume that everything in their life is all right, but all of a sudden they discover that the reality is quite the opposite. We can perceive that the total decline resulted from the family's alienation from each other and lack of communication with the girl and the society. The real problem lies in the fact that the elders do not know anything about the youth. The tragedy presented in this movie came to happen to family where it was the least expected to happen." (1)

The movie script divided the characters into two different, if not contradictory, dramatic groups. The first consists of the family of Khalid, an accountant whose modest clothes reveal a lot about his character. His face looks sad, complaining, like that of an old man, despite the

مصادر "يا دنيا يا غرامي" ١٩٩٦:

- (١) إيريس نظمي: صور على الشاشة "يا دنيا يا غرامي" مهما كانت الآمي قلبي يحبك"، ١٩٩٦/٨/١٦، القاهرة: مجلة آخر ساعة.
- (٢) ديانا جبور: "مجتمع نكوري انهزامي تفضحه ثلاث نسوة" في "يا دنيا ... يا غرامي"، ١٩٩٦/٢/٢٦، القاهرة: مجلة فن.
- (٣) سمير فريد: "يا دنيا يا غرامي" - "انتزاع الأمل في واقع التسعينات"، ١٩٩٦/٧/١٥، القاهرة: جريدة الجمهورية.
- (٤) عاطف سليمان: سينمائيات: "السينما بخير ... يا دنيا يا غرامي"، ١٩٩٦/٦/١٨، القاهرة: جريدة الوفد.
- (٥) هشام الصواف: "بالبلدي : يا دنيا يا غرامي" ١٩٩٦/١٢/١٢، القاهرة: مجلة الكواكب.
- (٦) فتحي العشري: "سينما نعم سينما لا: يا سينما يا غرامي"، ١٩٩٦/٦/١٧، القاهرة: جريدة الأهرام.

and they disappeared with the romantic light of the sunset. This closing scene which was shot by the camera of Muhsen Nasr is considered a magnificent portrait.(Nazmi ,2)

stability. The female characters were depicted as being more persistent, despite the fact that this characteristic emerged during disappointing social circumstances. They proved to be less able to adapt themselves with the society, as they did what the social reality required, out of being obliged, rather than wishing, to do it. For example, when Sikina accepted to undergo the hymenoplasty, she wept as if she had just lost her virginity. In this scene, the viewer shares the character her feeling and wishes she did not undergo the hymenoplasty. However, it was impossible for her to live in the society with this conviction, because she will then become a socially outcast individual. Nawal was obliged to accept a comom law marriage as the suitor was a married rich man. Although she was not happy in her marriage, but she had to accept it because she was over thirty and her only source of support was her job in the flower shop. Zahira suffers from schizophrenia; she is neither sane nor insane. She looks at the street with contempt and deals with reality indifferently; thus she is only abnormal in her behavior towards the society rather than her soul.

The movie started with a panorama of the daily life in the poor quarter, including two groups of girls standing opposite each other while playing and singing a song that the previous generations used to sing. The movie ends with the same theme, as the three defeated girls are shown while holding each other by their hands with their backs to the camera, and they already have indulged in singing Shadia's song (the three of us are as nice as sugar candy). Then they started laughing while going through the gate of the quarter

refuses to undergo a hymenoplasty and insists on telling her colleague who proposed to her about what had happened to her. But he gives up his proposal and this symbolizes his weak moral attitude, and this is stresses in the movie in the scene in which he leaves her and goes to the bathroom of the coffee house. He also leaves his keys on the table, which is symbolic of him sacrificing the keys which might have enabled him to enter a broader world. This represents a shattering blow to Sikina who then feels that the whole society rejects her, because all people prefer believing a lie to listening to the truth. This leads her to adopting the dirty ways of the society, as she accepts to undergo a hymenoplasty and then marries another man. Previously, she had lost her dream of marrying the man whom she loved and who was lost by joining the extremists who wanted to do away with whatever is different from their thoughts. They even tried to kill her at the night of her wedding. The movie presents a figuration of what the Egyptian woman who belongs to the low class suffers to protect her life and defend her existence in the society. The male characters in previous periods of our history received many blows as they were always in a state of confrontation, either in their work, where their salaries were not sufficient to help them lead a decent life, or on the level of syndicates and political activity. Thus, they are not to blame because they suffered a great deal and underwent many afflictions. They female characters did not experience the same circumstances, so they were readier to shoulder social responsibilities. During certain periods of time in our history, the mother undertook the protection of the social

to a specified term contract of utilization. The three female characters in this movie try to adapt themselves to life which is very difficult in such social conditions.

Although the reality of the life of the three characters is disappointing, they resist and try to find an outlet seeking reconciliation with this reality, even if this requires making concessions. In this case, the concessions do not affect the essence, but they are rather a kind of adaptation. However, accepting less than what one wishes to have may lead to a change in one's essence, especially on the part of those who tend to clash with life rather than seek reconciliation with it. This is the case of Abdu who resorted to joining religious extremists after his return from Kuwait during the Gulf War. It is also the same case of Sikina's brother, Hasan, who was in love with Nawal, and who resorts to introversion, where he lives in a state of schizophrenic self-complacency. Thus, he is overcome by his difficult conditions which are the outcome of his joblessness. The extremism of Abdu, the insanity of Hasan, and the fraudulent practices of Yusef represent a kind of revolt against the horrible reality. However they are defeated at the end.

Such is the condition of the male characters in the movie; they are easily defeated by life's trials. On the contrary, the three female characters are strong, relentless, and uncorrupted, although they are blameworthy if their cases are to be considered through the society's viewpoint, especially Sikina who lost her virginity. From a moral point of view, she is not to blame, as she was convinced that it happened within a love relationship."(Gabbour 1) She also

to adapt themselves to the life requirements and how they try to stick to hope in the midst of the unstable living conditions in the nineties which witnessed drastic political economical, social, and intellectual changes on the national, Arabic, and international levels, and the fall of old life systems and the emergence of new systems. Such conditions led to the emergence of religious extremism, which led to terrorism.(Fareed 4) This is represented in Abdu, Batta's brother who had a love relationship with Sikina which ended with her losing her virginity. When he proposed to her, he just wanted to atone for that incident. Sikina refuses his proposal and refuses to wear the hijab, as she thinks that it is not the only thing that indicates a woman's adherence to the teachings of her religion and morality. She accepts another proposal of marriage by Adel, her colleague, but when she tells him about her problem, he gives up his proposal. She then resorts to undergoing a hymenoplasty, whereby she restores her virginity and marries a teacher within the same week. In this atmosphere which prevailed in Cairo in the nineties, marriage became more important than love and appearance more significant than reality. This led to the increase in the percentage of divorce as well as murders. This human misery is intensified by the solutions which the society offers through TV programs which depend on advertising through holding contestations between viewers. At the beginning of the movie, we see Sikina dreaming of winning an apartment in Mohandeseen through any of such programs, after she wins on apartment but she soon discovers that it was to be offered to the winner according

she may die while alone. She becomes friends with Yusef, Batta's fiancé who thinks that it is a good chance for him to make a fortune through her. She also becomes friends with Batta despite the class differences, and she eventually dies among the three friends and leaves a will that Batta should take the painting. However, Batta who does not know the value of the painting takes it just because the portrait looks like her aunt.

The scenarist Muhammad Helmi Hilal managed to portray the heroines through the common features of their characters, but he gives special attention to the individual features of each one of them. The three are about to become old maids and they do not have maintainers. Nawal's father is dead and we are informed that Sikina's is imprisoned, but we do not know what his crime was, while Batta's father is paralyzed. Thus, all of them had to depend on themselves in managing their affairs, and they were to depend on their intermediate scholastic degrees for supporting themselves. The scenarist stresses the fact that the time of the incidents of the movie, has oppressive social and economic features, The three girls work in selling items which people buy for their pleasure, but neither of them can obtain any of them. Batta works as a dressmaker in a workshop. She makes dresses but cannot wear any of them. Nawal works in a flower shop; she sell flowers and delivers them to the rich people but does not have even a single flower in her house. Sikina sells perfume but cannot use them. This movie exposes the nature of this time, and the director Magdi Ahmad Ali presents the life of the lower middle class in Cairo in the modern time. He explains to us how people try

not marry because he works as a mechanic and does not like his job. He used to defraud people so as to collect money, in order to use it for preparing himself for marriage, but he is eventually arrested and imprisoned. The second is called Sikina, and she works as a saleswoman in a shop. She is in love with her friend's brother, Batta, who works in Kuwait and she waits for his return with money, so that they may be able to marry. However, he returns with nothing, because of the Gulf crisis. Moreover, he deflowers her and then leaves her and joins a terrorist group. He stipulates that she wears the veil to marry her, but she refuses and a friend of her tries to convince her to undergo a hymenoplasty to restore her virginity, but she refuses and tells her colleague who proposed to her about her problem, but he gives up his proposal. Therefore, she accepts to undergo a hymenoplasty. Nawal, the third friend, is in love with Sikina's brother, who is a university graduate who writes poetry and likes music. He joins the waiting list of the graduates who seek a job through the government program of employment. He becomes insane and accuses her of chasing him to marry him. Nawal works as a saleswoman in a flower shop, whose owner tries to rape her. One of the shop's rich clients courts her, but she rejects his advances, so he decides to marry her, but in secret as he was married. She accepts as she was afraid of becoming an old maid. A fourth female character is Zahira who is a descendant of a noble family, but she only possesses an apartment and luxurious furniture besides a precious painting, and she is supported by some of her friends who live in Paris. She looks for friends because she is afraid that

Ya Donia Ya Gharami
(O Life You are My Love), 1996

The setting of this movie is a number of small apartments which have few pieces of furniture in a building in a poor area where the heroines of the movie live. The setting here is quite different from that which was usually depicted in Naguib Mahfouz's stories. Here it is one building, rather than separate low houses, where tens of families live in small apartments whose walls have been corroded. In such a place, such families are acquainted with each other and they know everything about each other's living conditions as if they were one extended family. Their doors are most of the time open and they do not hide anything from each other. The scenario was written by Muhammad Helmi Hilal and the title is the same as one of Muhammad Abdel-Wahab's songs, which dates back to more than half a century. It says:

O life, you are my love

Whatever my suffering may be like

My heart loves you, life.

The plot of the movie presents the story of three girls who are friends and who live in this poor area. They enter in love relationships which interlace. The first, Fatima, has the nickname Batta. She is in love with her fiancé, Yusef, and they have been engaged for fifteen years. They could

- (١١) مصطفى درويش: سينما ١٩٨٩ "الافتعال يجمد سيدة الشاشة"، ٢/١٣/١٩٨٩، القاهرة: مجلة روز اليوسف.
- (١٢) محمد عودة: "سيفمونييات سينمائية"، ١٩٨٩/٢/٩، القاهرة: مجلة صباح الخير.
- (١٣) نبيل زكي: يوميات الأخبار "يوم مر ... يوم حلو"، ١٩٨٩/٩/٢٦، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (١٤) نشرة نادي السينما، السنة ٢٢ (١) العدد ١٢، ١٩٨٩/٣/٢، حديث مع فايز غالي مؤلف فيلم "يوم مر ... يوم حلو" - أحمد عبد العال.
- (١٥) نشرة نادي السينما السنة ٢٢ (١) العدد ١٥، ١٩٨٩/٤/١٠، "يوم مر ... يوم حلو وميلاد موجة جديدة" زكريا عبد الحميد.

مصادر "يوم مر ... يوم حلو" ١٩٨٨:

- (١) أحمد صالح: أخبار السينما، أهم أحداث ٨٨: اليوم الحلو الذي لا يجيء ١٩٨٨/١٢، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (٢) عادل الحفناوي: "حملة مدبرة لقتل المخرجين الجدد" ١٩٨٩/٢/٢٤، القاهرة: جريدة المساء.
- (٣) سمير فريد: سينما "يوم مر ... يوم حلو" ١٩٨٩/١/٩، القاهرة: جريدة الجمهورية.
- (٤) عبد النور خليل: فن وثقافة "كلمة نقد فانت حمامة في "يوم مر ... يوم حلو" مواجهة جديدة لقضية اجتماعية قديمة، ١٩٨٨/١١/٢٥، القاهرة: مجلة المصور.
- (٥) علي أبو شادي: "يوم مر جدًا" ١٩٨٩/١/٩، القاهرة: روز اليوسف.
- (٦) عواطف صادق: "يوم حلو ... يوم مر"، ١٩٨٨/٣/٧، القاهرة: جريدة الأهرام.
- (٧) كمال القلش: "رأي في فيلم "الزقاق المر" ١٩٨٩/٢/٥، القاهرة: جريدة الجمهورية.
- (٨) ماجدة خير الله: فانت حمامة تعود في سينما حلوة وأيام مرة، ١٩٨٩/٣/٢٦، القاهرة: جريدة الوفد.
- (٩) منى ثابت: "يوم حلو ويوم مر في حياة فانت حمامة"، ١٩٨٨/٤/١٣، القاهرة: مجلة آخر ساعة.
- (١٠) مصطفى أمين: "فكرة"، ١٩٨٩/٣/٦، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.

the eighties. Those conditions were given rise by the open door policy and the new investment policies. Thus, she suffered from the oppression of the whole society rather than particular individuals. She strived against poverty, and during that she was steadfast and she managed to complete her contention and was able to experience the sweetness of sweet days despite the innumerable bitter days she experienced.

with the return of the fleeing son who had become a grownup.

The movie's simplicity adds to its attractiveness and excites the viewer to such an extent that he forms his own attitude towards the incidents in the movie. He feels he is one of the members of this poor family which strives to live, and confronts evil people and bad living circumstances. This feature of the movie and the fact that it makes the viewer familiar with its incident makes it different from many other movies that tend to create a viewer's attitude that lies in either support for or resentment of the incidents. There is nothing new in making the viewer sympathize with this poor woman who tries to maintain her family in the mist of oppression, and during that she experiences a variety of emotions and situations : cheerfulness, sadness, victory, defeat, gain, and loss. She also seeks help in superstition and the dead people known for their religiosity to confront the powers of evil. Likewise, there is not anything new in hating Urabi because of his bad treatment of Eisha and her children. It is more important to live in the world of the characters and to experience their emotions throughout their relationships. When we become sure that we have rid of our passiveness as viewers watching ourselves in those characters from distance, and that we have participated in the incidents, we then can form an attitude if there should be one. Our attitude should then be formed from our new situation as characters in the movie rather than viewers. Eisha and her family, who belonged to a poor area, suffered from the social and economic conditions which prevailed in Egypt in

education, and who is relentless in the midst of the worst conditions. Eisha is also a weak mother who accepts to marry her daughter to an idle man, whom she does not like, just because this was her daughter's wish. She continues to resist from day to day, which makes her a real character. She convinces her son to leave school and work in a bakery for a daily wage of one pound to help her in supporting their family. When the boy expresses his surprise at her decision, and tells her about his wish to continue going to school, she keeps maneuvering and buys him a new shoes. She entrusts his sister with informing him about the dire necessity of his going to work in the bakery. At the end of every day of work, the mother would continue to talk with her boy trying to instill in him that he became the man of the family. The boy's work was the only substitute for protecting her daughters from being exploited by the villains of their alley. The boy continued to move from one job to another, he first works in the bakery then in a workshop and finally in a garage. This emphasizes his complete separation from his childhood. He was approaching adolescence and he had casual acquaintance with a girl who was elder than him and who was as lost as he was. Incidents develop as the boy and his sister flee from the family's house and Urabi's relationship with his sister-in-law is exposed, and the latter tries to commit suicide. Despite all these sad incidents, the mother is able to feel happy when one of her daughters passed the final exam of the first educational stage. The news was conveyed to her by the dumb who had married her fleeing daughter and got a child who was the beginning of a new life. This coincided

only means of this family to communicate with others, and through it the mother used to spread her white sheet in the morning, declaring the beginning of a sweet day despite all the bitter days. Through the window, the son flees from the oppression of Urabi and through it he returns. "The dumb (played by Mahmud Al-Gindy) represents the good character which tries to stop all the evil characters from harming others. He is dumb' the author and the director intended it because he is depicted weak and less resourceful than the evil people whom he confronts, like Urabi, the mechanic, and the owner of the bakery. Those were mischievous people who could bully others, while he was trying to resist them, but in silence." (Now.3) If we reflect on the title of the movie, we can find that it does not have "and" which was also intended as bitter and sweet days may mix without us being able to mark the beginning or the end of either. This is clear in the funeral scene. In the midst of the atmosphere of sadness, Eisha jumps in happiness like children to watch a program on TV, in which her son was awarded a prize which he won in a contestation. On another occasion, she has a fit while a fat bride was very happy when she was trying a wedding dress Eisha sewed while the bride's fatness evoked laughter. This movie is considered a genuine contribution in the respect of emphasizing the importance of the role played by women such as Eisha, in the society. Eisha's character is different from the typical image of the Egyptian woman which was presented in a large number of movies. She is not that mother who strives for supporting her children through all legal means until they complete all phases of their

does not have a definite orientation, but he continues to maltreat the mother because his feeling of loss made him antipathetic. He takes all opportunities to achieve self-realization on the expense of others. As soon as he joined this family, he tried to have mastery over them, so he bullied them and treated them very badly. Although Urabi's behavior makes him a paradigm of the villain, he proves to be a coward and he is after all the victim of ignorance and bad social conditions. He was impacted by the life of consumption in the gulf when he was working there. This life was copied by people in Cairo who would try to live a luxurious life, even if they did not have enough money to do that. Any of them would spend the last penny he has on buying an imported pack of cigarettes. Such people consider that life is nothing more than enjoying the present moment, regardless of anything, to such an extent that Urabi sought enjoying himself with his sister-in-law.

The capability of the director, Khairi Bishara is manifested through many scenes in the movie. One of them is that of the roaming clown who displays some tricks in the alley, behind Urabi, to indicate that Urabi himself will be another clown and will deceive this poor family. Another scene is that of the entrance of Urabi and his bride to the house through the window, on a board, because of the flowing of the drainage water. This scene creates deep realization of this situation and indicates two meanings : Urabi entered this house through the window like thieves and he would leave it through the window like the evil wind which blows for some time then stops. The director employs the window to convey other meanings. It was the

neighbors their wedding ceremonies. The scene which presents this family while attending the wedding ceremony of their Christian neighbor is one of the few scenes in the Egyptian cinema in this respect. It shows this Muslim family while attending this wedding ceremony in the church and they congratulate their neighbor. The marriage of Eisha's eldest daughter adds to her financial and emotional oppression, but she manages to meet the requests of her son-in-law, Urabi by giving him a room in her house and buying him a fridge. Thus, only one room was left for her and the rest of her children. She accepts this situation to help her daughter and so that her son-in-law may help her and so that life may give her a respite. However, the flow of the drainage water in the scene of the wedding destroys her hopes (this scene reminds us of the scene of Hasanein in *Bidaya wa Nihaya* (A Beginning and an End) when he was returning home from the Military Academy on his first holiday. He was encountered by a herd of sheep which blocked his way. The flowing of the drainage water in this particular time is quite symbolic, as it anticipates the corruption of the groom. He soon reveals his real character by treating his wife and her family very badly and bullying them, which led Su'ad her and her brother to flee from their home. Furthermore, he courts his sister-in-law and establishes a relationship with her. In contrast to Eisha's character, Urabi is the villain whose existence among this family endangers it. If we contemplate his character, we find that sometimes we sympathize with him because of his bad conditions. However, we soon feel contempt towards him, as he proves to be cowardly. He is lost because he

economic policies which were criticized by many politicians and economists led to the prevalence of poverty among a large number of people, to such an extent that such a mother resorted to selling her son's prize. The mother's main concern was earning her living and supporting her children without them having to sacrifice their honor. Eisha is poverty stricken, as she inherited her husband's debts and other debts which were the outcome of her daughter's illness. Moreover, the prices were rising continuously which led to intensifying their misery. Thereupon, the mother had to make her daughter Lamiya' join a job in a poor hospital so that she may help support the family. Eisha belongs to the lower middle class, whose prospects were destroyed because of the economic policies of As-Sadat, and whose chances of better living circumstances became endangered. These bad conditions forced her to accept the proposal of a poor laborer to marry her daughter and she waited for four years before he could prepare himself for the marriage. She also held the same attitude towards her other daughter Su'ad who was torn between a young man who was a mechanic and who proposed to her and another whom she preferred and who was a milk seller. There was also the third daughter who left school because of the mother's inability to support her and the fourth daughter who was suffering from an incurable disease, and finally her son who was exposed to bitter experiences that a man could not endure. This family represents the typical Egyptian family that can survive despite the miserable living conditions and whose wretchedness and strife for earning a living do not stop them from sharing their

Concerning the portrayal of characters, Eisha is a typical Egyptian woman who belongs to the lower middle class and who retains all the concerns and contradictions of this class. Although Eisha is an average character which one may encounter in such areas, she is stronger than all the moments she lives, as "she knows well how to deal with life." (2) She experiences all ups and downs of life, and sorrow and happiness without her being affected. She lives any moment as if it were the whole life. She was not negative in her attitude towards the incident of both her daughter's and son's escape. She did not depend on the fact that she brought her children on gratitude and that they would surely return to her. Her silence indicated that she was assured, and she was behaving as a mother who was well aware that life continues. Eisha's character can be compared to the main character in the traditional movies, although she represents one of the members of a family that leads a miserable life after losing its only maintainer and sustainer. The hard living circumstances led this mother to work hard to earn her living and to support her children through legal gains, so as to protect them against anyone who might think of exploiting them. The opening scene which presents the mother while receiving a prize which her son won in a contestation held by one of the TV advertising programs indicates the prevalence of the luck philosophy, when work is not available. This explains to us, in the following scene, the reason why the mother was obliged to sell this prize for a hundred pounds to use its price for repaying a debt. The duration of these two scenes is about five minutes, but they indicate that the present

Yom Morr ... Yom Helw
(a Bitter Day ... a Sweet Day), 1988

This movie tells the story of a widow whose husband left her a four adolescent daughters and a kid. The plot of the movie is the days of this family which vary between bitter and sweet days. Some of the distinguishing features of this movie are the technique of narration, the setting, and the portrayal of characters.

Concerning the technique of narration, the director depended on harmonizing the duration of the shot and the state of attentiveness it stirs in the viewer. Thus, it achieved both an aesthetic effect and the excitement of the viewer.

Concerning the setting, it is one of the outstanding features of this movie. It depicts a real setting typical of the Egyptian poor areas inside Cairo. It is a setting that presents the very period of time rather than luxurious decorations and the traditional Egyptian allies which usually appear in many movies. This setting made the viewer feel familiar with the movie and the typical problems of the poor areas which lie in crowdedness, noise, pollution, and drainage problems. These elements highlight the crushing crisis of Eisha and her children.(1) Inside Eisha's house we see also some of the elements which add to the genuineness of the setting : the very poor furniture and the walls which have been corroded. We can also see a fridge wrapped in a piece of cloth to protect it, and it is kept for her daughter who was to marry soon.

مصادر "زوجة رجل مهم" ١٩٨٨:

- (١) جمعية الفيلم - العدد (٦٩٣) للنشرة الأسبوعية/السبت ٢١ نوفمبر ١٩٨٧، البرنامج: العرض الأول للفيلم الروائي الطويل "زوجة رجل مهم"، أجرى الحوار وأعدّه للنشر أحمد عبد الله.
- (٢) خيرية البشلاوي: "سينما ١٩٨٨ - زوجة رجل مهم مريثة لصوت وزمن عبد الحليم حافظ" ١٧/١/١٩٨٨، القاهرة: جريدة المساء.
- (٣) دليل الفنون (مجلة فرنسية عربية أسبوعية - يصدرها المكتب الكاثوليكي المصري للسينما والمسرح والتلفزيون - رئيس التحرير فريد المزلاوي - الاثنين ٢٩ فبراير ١٩٨٨ - العدد ١٧ السنة ٣٥).
- (٤) رجاء النقاش: مطالعات وتأملات "زوجة رجل مهم، ولماذا تعترض الرقابة؟" ١٦/١/١٩٨٧، القاهرة: مجلة المصور.
- (٥) طارق الشناوي: "حكايات وراء الفن"، ١٣/٧/١٩٨٧، القاهرة: مجلة روز اليوسف.
- (٦) عبد الستار الطويلة: "شاهدت لك: فيلم مهم جدًا - زوجة رجل مهم" ٨/١٠/١٩٨٧، القاهرة: مجلة صباح الخير.
- (٧) عبد النور خليل: كلمة نقد "زوجة رجل مهم والريبورتاج السينمائي" ٩/١٠/١٩٨٧، القاهرة: مجلة المصور.
- (٨) مهرجان موسكو السينمائي - المؤتمر الصحفي لـ "زوجة رجل مهم" نشرة نادي السينما، العدد (١٨) لسنة ١٩٨٧ - موسكو - عدلي الدهيبي.
- (٩) المجلس الأعلى للثقافة - المركز القومي للسينما - مركز الثقافة السينمائية، الندوة الأسبوعية لمركز الثقافة السينمائية - العدد رقم (٢) ٢٧/٤/١٩٨٨.

through his black sunglasses. His style made her feel that he was a superman with whom any girl would feel that she was a queen and that all people were in awe of her. After their marriage, she continues to treat him romantically, but he treats her as his inferior and convinces her to befriend his boss's ridiculous wife. He knows how to make everything goes in the course he wants. However, he turns their house into an office through his continuous work and inviting his colleagues to his house. He even brings with him his office boy to prepare him coffee, and when Mona sees that, she becomes angry and insists on leaving, but he convinces her to stay and a dialogue takes place between them.

He says, "During the days of engagement, you used to be happy and you used to tell me, 'All doors are open when you are with me and I feel that I am a queen and the people are my subjects.' At that time I used to tell myself, 'This is the kind of girl who will support me to attain what I aspire to.'"

She sadly replies, "I was naïve and I used to admire you, because I was still young, but now I have grown up and I have discovered the reality."

Thus, Mona understands Hisham's nature, and tries to help him get rid of his fetters and overcome his dilemma, but he refuses. So she decides to part from him, but he kills her father who came to take her and then commits suicide. Thus, Mona is released from her fetters.

a butterfly. He created a contrast between these things which symbolize Mona's romanticism and her husband's gun and his papers which he used to fabricate accusations against innocent people.

Concerning Hisham, he considers himself as being the center of the universe and overestimates himself. Even when he goes to propose to Mona, he does not ask her whether she accepts to marry him, because he is confident that she will admire him and he takes with him his boss rather than his father as is the custom. When reflecting on the matter of proposing to his wife, he follows the rules of his job. He chooses her because he is informed that she was an average girl and that her family belonged to the same class as his. He then muses "This is the kind of girl who will endure my financial circumstances." Hisham tries by all means to make Mona experience a continuous state of admiration for him, giving her no chance to reflect on anything. He acts hastily and tries to keep her in a state of surprise, whereupon she becomes fascinated by his style and she submits to his views. He once tells her while in the train "I just did not want to waste time and I wanted to win you." It is as if he were talking about a piece of furniture which he liked to buy. Because of her innocence and romanticism, Mona could not notice the connotation of his words. The director tries to emphasize her romantic characteristics by focusing on her earring, which takes the form of a butterfly. Although he told her many times that his lifelong dream was to become an officer, she could not perceive that he was a narcissist young man who was seeking authority. At that time, she used to see the world

19th. However, both are attributed to the insanity of the paranoiac officer." (2)(Bishlawe,) The director managed to present the dilemma of Mona in a highly artistic way. Before her marriage, she always appears happy and enjoying her life with her family. She goes to the cinema, enjoys her time with her family by spending their time enjoying nature while sitting in a cafeteria on the Nile. Other scenes show her while traveling by train or ascending stairs happily, to present her feeling of freedom and happiness. After her marriage, she is shown while walking in a narrow corridor, inside her room or inside the kitchen, or while sleeping on her bed. Thus, she is always surrounded with walls. Her character is distinguished by gradual changes. She used to be romantic and quite, but she gradually becomes nervous and unable to control her temper. She is an example of the kind romantic girl whom the shocks cause to lose her patience and forbearance. When her husband is dismissed, her neighbor urges her to leave but she replies, "It is too late ... I have missed the opportune time. Now, it is very difficult for me to leave him in his dilemma." When her husband kills her father, the scene which represents the climax of the plot, Mona experiences a moment of enlightenment, as she stands up and is able to start over, which indicates that she still has a lot to achieve in the future. The director employed colors to symbolize certain meanings. The red color was used to symbolize romanticism, but was also used to symbolize violence. He also employed things to symbolize meanings, such as the lace curtains, the cassette tapes of Abdel-Halim Hafiz's songs, and Mona's earrings which takes the form of

exploit the incidents of January 18th, and 19th by fabricating accusations against some people who are eventually proven to have been abroad at that time. Thereupon, he is ordered to retire as a punishment. He is shocked but refuses to admit what has happened. Mona's father comes to take her to live with him, but Hisham kills him then commits suicide. The author, Ra'uf Tawfiq says (Ibid) : "Hisham is the type of character that thinks that he derives power and life from his position, which he considers is the only support for him. When he loses everything in a flash, he becomes destructive. Hisham kills his father-in-law because he wanted to deprive him of the last support in his life, and realizing that his wife would never accept to live with him after he had killed her father, he commits suicide.

The author says about the connection between the wife's character and Abdel-Halim Hafiz "This connection was intended. The wife's character was intended to be romantic and sensible rather than realistic"(1). She was living with her family in the midst of fields and surrounded by the Nile, and this natural atmosphere helped her develop high sensibility. She also represents one of the young women of her generation, and she used to record on the cassette tapes where and when she listened to the song. The movie interlaces the couple's marital life with the political incidents which occurred in the seventies, the period which witnessed the death of Abdel-Halim Hafiz. "It also creates parallelism between the atmosphere of disappointment that dominated this marital relationship and the political and social disappointment which dominated that period and which reached its peak in the incidents of January 18th, and

incidents through her husband, whose behavior dominated our life as he was one of the people in authority that dealt with those incidents. On the other hand, like the rest of youth at that period, Mona, the heroine, used to enjoy listening to the songs of Abdel-Halim Hafiz, whose melodious voice expressed the wishes and dreams of that generation.

Mona is a university student who was leading a peaceful life among her family in Al-Minia. While listening to Abdel-Halim Hafiz's songs, she used to record the emotions the songs stirred in her. An officer called Hisham, who works in the National Intelligence, proposes to her and she admires him a lot, at the beginning, and accepts to marry him. After that, they move to Cairo, as her husband was promoted and he was to join the National Security Intelligence there. There, she becomes unable to endure this new life which is characterized by oppression and subjugation, which her husband practices against people who are reported to be suspected of any political activity and even innocent people. He also fabricates accusations against people, even from among his relatives.

In the midst of this horrible life, Mona attempts to escape by asking her husband's permission to join the university. He agrees, because he plans to exploit her in obtaining information about the students without her knowledge. She also resorts to spending her time in playing cards with her next door neighbor. However, her husband tries to get rid of that neighbor, by fabricating an accusation against her, whereupon she is arrested and her house is or confiscated or sealed locked by the police. He then tries to

Zawgat Ragul Muhim (An Important Man's Wife), 1988

Ra'uf Tawfiq tells us about the circumstances of writing the story of this movie and how its idea emerged. One day, the director Muhammad Khan visited him and told him that he was thinking of directing a movie which presents a story about a woman who plays cards. The author pondered on this idea and reached a conclusion : Human behavior is always the outcome of social circumstances. A person who plays cards usually has a social motive. He continues to think about the kind of circumstances that might lead a woman to resort to playing cards, and he reaches a conclusion. The circumstances of such a woman are surely ones that cause her to be introvert, whereupon she can only express herself through playing cards. He says ,“Thus, we managed to form this image and the idea of the movie was born. Such a woman must have suffered from oppression, and this example can be used to represent a large number of people who must have suffered from oppression and subjugation during a certain period of their lives.” (Film Society# 693).

The author started writing the story in a historical context, presenting the events of January 1977 and the previous incidents which resulted in large scale apprehension acts during the seventies. The historical incidents were employed to be phases of the wife's life who is a witness to a whole period of time which all of us witnessed. However, she was made to be closer to those

مصادر أحلام هند وكاميليا ١٩٨٨:

- (١) أحمد صالح: أخبار السينما "أحلام الخاديات وأحلام السينما المصرية"، ١٩٨٨/٨/٢٩، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (٢) إيريس نظمي: صور من الشاشة "أحلام هند وكاميليا" والواقعية الحقيقية في أفلام محمد خان، ١٩٨٨/٧/٢٠، القاهرة: مجلة آخر ساعة.
- (٣) ثناء أبو الحمد: "أفكار صلاح أبو سيف بعد ٣٠ سنة" ١٩٨٧/١٢/١٢، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (٤) حسني عبد الرحيم: "هند وكاميليا ... فكاهة تتسجها الأحزان" ١٩٨٨، القاهرة: جريدة الأهالي.
- (٥) سامي السلاموني: "عندما يصبح الواقع الذي تعرفه سينما جميلة في هند وكاميليا"، ١٩٨٨، القاهرة: مجلة الإذاعة والتلفزيون.
- (٦) سمير فريد: السينما "أحلام هند وكاميليا طوبى للفقراء ... لهم الجنة" ١٩٨٨/٧/١١، القاهرة: جريدة الجمهورية.
- (٧) سمير فريد: "أحلام هند وكاميليا، تحفة أخرى من حركة الواقعية المصرية الجديدة"، ١٩٨٨/٨، القاهرة: جريدة الجمهورية.
- (٨) فريدة النقاش: قضية للمناقشة: "أفق للسينما الجديدة"، ١٩٨٨/٦/٢٦، القاهرة: جريدة الأهالي.
- (٩) ماجدة حليم: مقعد في الصالة: "ما هي أحلام هند وكاميليا؟" ١٩٨٨، القاهرة: جريدة الأهرام.
- (١٠) هشام لاشين: "أحلام هند وكاميليا إدانة للواقع المصري"، ١٩٨٨، القاهرة: جريدة الأحرار.

the carnival caravan and then to the beach in Alexandria to realize some of their simple dreams.

We realize that the taxi driver was planning to rob them with his accomplice. Their end occurs on the beach in Alexandria. They have lost their money and jewelry and even Ahlam. After a tiring search for Ahlam, along the beach, they find her, and they then feel extremely happy. They were left with the reality and its dreams, and they were happy because they were still able to live and dream. As long as they still have each other and most important they still have Ahlam which means "Dreams".

point , their friendship takes the form of a mother relationship. Kamilia acts the mother- daughter as she wishes to play this role, while Hend acts the daughter because she needs someone to take care of her.

This relationship is expressed through Kamilia taking care of Hend, as she prepares her for her wedding by helping her wash and style her hair. This is even more strongly reiterated when Kamilia is informed that Hend became pregnant, as she then cries frightened. After that she starts looking for Eid and convinces him to marry Hend and he accepts. However, he is arrested and imprisoned during a fight with another man, but after he is released he marries Hend. Kamilia was expelled from the house where she was working, as she was accused of robbery. However, she continues to strive in order to earn her living, through selling vegetables in the market. When Hend delivers a baby girl, Ahlam, Kamilia becomes very happy. Director Muhammad Khan takes a tour in the inner world of the poor people. Their houses are quite different in heights, and many people live on the roofs of such house. There, a family lives in a room without a ceiling, and we can see a boy while trying to steal a chicken, and another looking for a match to light a cigarette. During that, the sound issuing from TV and radio can be heard in the background, as people in such places are used to have the volume of their TV sets and radio turned to its maximum. The end of the movie shows us the end of the different characters. Sayid becomes a heroine addict and Eid is sent to prison. On the other hand, Hend and Kamilia find the money that Eid had stolen and hidden. They take Ahlam to

streets are expected to come across with each other. Eid tries to approach Kamilia twice; once when they were walking with Hend and he tried to catch her hand, behind Hend's back, and when they were in the room. These two incidents are also significant. Here, Eid behaves in a natural way, motivated by neither treachery nor immorality. There are other scenes which reflect innocence and spontaneity. When Uthman asks Hend to leave and she spends the night with Kamilia on the stairs, and then in the morning he apologizes in an innocent childish manner. Also, when Kamilia decides to flee, she tears Uthman's mattress in a childish way, so that he would not be able to utilize it for sleeping. Analyzing Kamilia's character, we find that she is positive and aware of the facts of life and that she acquired her awareness from the incidents of daily life, rather than through ideological thinking. Once she tells Hend "I used to work as a servant for a wage, but now I do the same job for Uthman for nothing." On another occasion, she tells Uthman, who then insisted on having sexual intercourse with her, claiming that it was his right "Take your right, Uthman," submitting to his desire, as if she were a prostitute.

At this point of the development in the plot of the movie, the movie reveals all its dramatic aspects; it is about friendship between women. Tackling this kind of friendship requires high sensibility and professional skills. Although both Hend and Kamilia do the same job, they are different. Hend belongs to the country side while Kamilia belongs to the city; the former is fertile while the latter is sterile; the former is tan while the latter is fair-complexioned. At this

Ahlam Hend we Kamilia
(Dreams of Hend and Kamilia), 1988

It is an example of a feminist movie directed by a male director, Muhammad Khan, who defends woman and attacks men's traditional view of women. Mr. Samir Fareed (in AL Gomhoreyy a Newspapere, 83) explained that the director employed the technique of the four classical movements of a symphony and used time intervals to separate the movements from each other. In the first movement we are introduced to Hend, a young widow from the country who arrives in Cairo to work as a servant, and Kamilia, a Cairene divorcee. They have something in common; Hend is suffering because of her uncle who usurps her wages and Kamilia is suffering because of her brother Sayid who does not have a regular job.

Hend becomes acquainted with Eid who is dismissed from his job as a taxi driver and joins a workshop for repairing tires, and she asks him to marry her. The second movement starts after a few years, as Kamilia marries Uthman, a poor contractor, who is an old man who thinks it is his right to marry another woman as a kind of rewarding himself after long years of striving for earning his living. Coincidence plays an important role in the movie, as Hend comes across Kamilia in the metro of Heliopolis and she comes across Eid there as well. Coincidence here is significant, because people who spend most of their time in

مصادر "ولا عزاء للسيدات" 1979:

- (1) أحمد السلامي: 1979/12/8، القاهرة: جريدة الجمهورية.
- (2) أمل فوزي: "حديث مع كاتيا ثابت"، 1979/9/15، القاهرة: مجلة صباح الخير.
- (3) جلال العشري: نوفمبر 1979، القاهرة: مجلة الفنون.
- (4) حُسن شاه: أبيض وأسود "رد على الخواجة هنري"، 1979/11/16، القاهرة: جريد الأخبار.
- (5) سمير فريد: سينما "ولا عزاء للسيدات" 1979/9/5، القاهرة: جريدة الجمهورية.
- (6) فوزية إبراهيم: "عودة فائن حمامة وسعاد حقنة فيتامين لتغذية السينما المصرية"، 1978/7/11، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (7) محمد تبارك: "سينما" 1979/8/12، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (8) ناصر حسين: "ولا عزاء للسيدات" 1979/9/23، القاهرة: جريدة روز اليوسف.

emotions and surrenders to the prevailing atmosphere, letting Rawia down, as he fears that his reputation will be harmed if he marries her, even after he realized that she was above suspicion.

Although this end is somewhat pessimistic, it is very close to the reality of the social relationships. This analytic shocking view makes us stand face to face with the deformity that befell our souls. It also draws our attention to the destructive consequences of our surrender to the social criteria. The movie Ureed Halan (I am Seeking a Solution), 1975 presented the problems of the Egyptian woman resulting from the old law of domestic relations which was later changed, especially the issue of the woman's right to get a divorce, only after the consent of her husband. However, the movie in question presents the problems of divorced women, for which no law can find a solution. This issue needs a comprehensive change in the social atmosphere and spreading awareness to help enhance the respect for the humanity of people.

husband, her family, and the whole society. Hamdi, Rawia's ex-husband, who renounced everything for the sake of a luxurious life, is not different from the rest of people in the society. However, he was given hard times, as he paid for what he did. He discovered that his wife was occupied with many other interests other than her marital life, as she used to spend her time in enjoyment. Feeling neglected, Hamdi revolts against that state of affairs, and his wife asks him to leave her. He eventually fails to continue in this marriage after realizing that all his ambitions came to an end. At that moment, he remembers his previous wife, Rawia and wishes to reunite with her and turn over a new leaf, depending on the fact that she was kindhearted. By that time, Rawia had started over as a new hope appeared in her life. Disappointed, he decides to kill Rawia, after he has almost become insane and the images of Rawia and Samiha, the prostitute, mix in his mind. He shoots her, thinking that he is putting an end to the image of his old clean marital life with her. By this act, Hamdi reaches the lowest point in his fate. The shooting of Rawia has significance in the plot of the movie, as it is the turning point that reveals that impact of the corrupt social criteria on the people's psychology. During the prosecution of Hamdi, he is confused and he refers to Rawia as Samiha. A haste and foolish secretary of the journal where Rawia works, publishes these words which lead to defaming Rawia. This incident represents a shattering blow to the dreams of Rawia who withdraws and lives with her anguish after she is confronted with the sanctimony and deformed psychology of people. Tariq Mathhar forsakes his true

capable of determining her future and managing her life in the way she decides, and she realized that a man is not a monster as her mother instilled in her mind. However, she discovered that her lover had also suffered a lot because of his wife, who deserted him and united with another man. He used to love his wife, but he never thought that she could leave him for any reason. Like Rawia, he wanted to turn over a new leaf in his life, after he had wasted much time in unsuccessful relationships. However, Tariq Mathhar belonged to the same society which based its attitudes towards divorced women on corrupt deformed thoughts. He eventually leaves Rawia and renounces his dream of leading a quiet warm marital life. He is affected by the rumors spread about Rawia concerning her honor, and adopts the corrupt criteria prevailing in the society. He decides to leave her because he fears for his own reputation as a public figure, and an editor-in-chief.

There are other three female characters in the movie : Abla, Omm Al-Kheir, and Samiha. Abla is Rawia's cousin who is forced to marry a rich man whom she hates because of his bad qualities, and because he is idle and impotent. Omm Al-Kheir refuses to remarry and prefers to work as a servant because she wants to have a house of her own. Samiha was also a victim of divorce which was the expected outcome of the wrong choice of her husband, but her suffering is intensified when her husband takes her three children into his custody. Her family refuses to file a case against him to take her children back because they did not want to support the children. She is further lost when she becomes a prostitute, as a form of punishing herself, her

she tried to convince herself that she could love him. However, after ten years, her husband encounters another woman who was rich and who belonged to a family that enjoyed a high social status. He divorced Rawia and married that woman to join the higher social status.

Rawia is the main character in the movie. She is innocent and kind, but she is inexperienced. Although she is familiar with the people in her society, she never expected that the society could cause people to lose their dignity and humanity. Thus, she cannot stand the oppression of the old social customs and values and the patterns of corrupt behavior which prevailed in the society. The movie describes Rawia's conflict against this atmosphere, and her eventual defeat. This phase of Rawia's life can be referred to as her real experience, as her marital experience is just a lesson which she understood quite well and decided never to submit to anyone else's opinions. Katia Thabit, the author of the story, made Rawia's parents die to make her confront such social atmosphere of oppression alone. However, she accepts the challenge and decides not to leave her house to live with her maternal aunt, and she refuses to sell her family's house or change her daughter's school. She also refuses to look for a suitor in the traditional way although this arouses the disapproval of all those around her. Furthermore, she decides to change her idle life by looking for a job. After she joins a job and achieves success, she falls in love with the gentle educated editor-in-chief of the journal Tarek Mathhar where she works. Until this point, Rawia proves to be successful and

Wa la Aza Lis-Saydat
(No Consolation for Women), 1979

This movie deals with the problems that a divorced woman face, through the problems of three characters : Rawiya who decided to live with her daughter and servant and decided to find a job to earn her living. She also decided to remarry and lead a normal life, but she is encountered by the deficient mentality of men and underdevelopment of the traditions of te middle class, and she almost loses her life during that. The other character is Samiha, Rawia's neighbor, who lives in her parents' house, but she deviated and became a prostitute, and the third is the servant Omm Al-Kheir who refuses to remarry until she has had her own house. Katia Thabit (the author) says : "The social view of the divorced woman is not fair, because it considers the woman as a stone in the middle of the sea which waves drive it here and there. Any rumor about her honor is usually harbored by the people, any normal behavior of hers is always looked at with suspicion, and whatever is said about her is believed; thus a divorced woman would be socially an outcast woman, despite the fact that this very society admits divorce."(Fawzy 2)

The theme of the movie discusses how a divorced woman can live within a society which blames divorce on her and always considers her the mistaken party. This theme is best represented in Rawia who was forced not to join the university, in order to marry a suitor whom her family has accepted to be her husband. After their marriage,

مصادر "أريد حلاً" ١٩٧٥:

- (١) أحمد صالح: "ترشيح أريد حلاً لجائزة أوسكار العالمية"، ١٢/١١٦/١٩٧٥، القاهرة: جريدة الأخبار.
- (٢) حسن إمام عمر: سينما "أريد حلاً" فيلم لعام المرأة"، ١١/٤/١٩٧٥، القاهرة: مجلة المصور.
- (٣) خيرية البشلاوي: "أريد حلاً" ١٤/٤/١٩٧٥، القاهرة: جريدة المساء.
- (٤) رفيق الصبان: سينما "أريد حلاً" وأفلام المعاناة"، ١٠/٥/١٩٧٥، القاهرة: مجلة الإذاعة والتلفزيون.
- (٥) سمير فريد: "أريد حلاً وقضية المرأة في السينما المصرية"، ٧/٤/١٩٧٥، القاهرة: جريدة الجمهورية.
- (٦) مفيد فوزي (سماعي): ٣١/٣/١٩٧٥، القاهرة: مجلة الإذاعة والتلفزيون.
- (٧) ناصر حسين: "قضية المرأة في السينما من (زينب) وحتى (أريد حلاً)"، ٦/٤/١٩٧٥، القاهرة: مجلة روز اليوسف.

attention the suffering of Dorriya, that delicate woman who wanted to obtain her freedom and we feel disappointed when she fails in achieving her legitimate justifiable goal in her inevitable encounter with the social reality represented in the deficiency of that law. This area of the inevitable encounter between the individual and the social reality has been one of the richest areas of developing dramatic conflicts."(Naser 15) We do sympathize with these human examples in their anguish and their conflict for the sake of their social freedom. This example has been reiterated in many works, beginning from *A Doll's House*, by Ibsen, when Nora (the heroine) slammed the door and left, indicating the end of her subordination to her husband up to the present time, as Dorriya fails to overcome the law of domestic relations, in the story written by Hosn Shah. We do sympathize with her when she cries, urging the society to protect the people from losing their dignity under social oppression. This gives the movie a significant feature, as it depicts the striking helplessness of the people suffering from social oppression, and the reality of the people's reflection on their motives.

Note : This movie encouraged women to make propositions concerning the law of domestic relations, thereupon a proposition concerning the modification of this law in conformity with the Islamic Law was submitted to the third national conference of the Common Arab Union in the presence of the foremost political figures including President Muhammad Anwar As-Sadat.

belong to the poor class. The court here acts as a trap where the people's humanity is humiliated, and where the class that makes the laws, represented by Dorriya, is reduced to the lowest position. In the court, we find a young woman called Saniya who has filed a case against her husband who works as a mechanic and who divorced her and married another woman. She was seeking to obtain alimony. The case is delayed several times, and during that a procurer tries to attract Saniya and she submits to him and joins him seeking easy gain. Then she gives up her case and her husband refuses to take his children in his custody. The other story is that of a woman called Hayat Al-Barani whose husband divorced her after thirty years of marriage and married a young girl. After she spends the delayed dowry, she is left with no means of support, so she files a case of alimony. After a long delay, the court judges against her and she is required to pay all the judicial expenses, but she files another case. However, she dies before it is settled and her death is considered one of the strongest criticisms of the law of domestic relations which is depicted in the movie as a ruthless monster, in much the same way as fate in the ancient Greek tragedies. In addition, when we hear those women speaking, we realize how much they are humiliated under this law, about which Dorriya says "How come that the Revolution changed everything except the law of domestic relations ? It should have been changed twenty-five years ago ! " This movie reached a high level of cinematic treatment and presents the issue which it adopted successfully through dramatic concentration and cinematic expression. Mr Naser Hussein says "We follow with great

She replies, "There is not even a first to have a second."

He says "I will not divorce you."

She replies "I will get a divorce by any means."

Thus, she decided to abandon her life with her husband who used to treat her as if she were an antique in his house. During her strife for her freedom, she is encountered by one of the most frightening aspects of social underdevelopment. Although the Egyptian woman attained her rights to education and work, she was never given the right to accept or refuse a suitor, who might become her husband with whom she might spend the rest of her life. Thus, the movie does not simply present a marital case, but rather a social reality, and the proposal of the movie is the inevitability of changing the law of domestic relations to help the society develop and the people obtain freedom. The fact that Dorriya is a journalist who belongs to the upper class indicates that even the people who make these denigrating laws suffer from them. Although Dorriya has the chance to meet the minister of justice, she goes to him hiding from the police who wanted to arrest her and return her to her husband's house by force to live there as a servant. This scene is quite ironical, as the heroine enjoys a social status and she is not a poor woman who already suffers from all forms of oppression and degradation. When she muses, "I am hiding just like murderers and thieves," we feel that we are in front of a woman who feels greatly oppressed. The other two stories begin here, as Dorriya appears in the court along with two other women who

The movie "Ureed Halan" (I am Seeking a Solution) is considered the first cry that broke from woman in her contention for obtaining the right of self determination, through the main story presented in the movie, that of Dorriya Azmy, and the stories of two more women who suffered from oppression and exploitation.

The first story is that of Dorriya who asks for divorce from her husband after twenty years of marriage. At the beginning of their marital life, she wanted to get divorced when she discovered that her husband was an immoral man; but her family refused, whereupon she had to submit to her fate, especially after she had a son. Over twenty years, she devoted herself to raising her son while living with a man who did not respect her and who considered her as one of the requirements of his position in the diplomatic corpse. Critic Samir Fareed sees that tolerating such a husband for twenty years for the sake of the son is an exaggerated matter.⁽¹⁾ Dorriya again asks for divorce, but when her husband refuses, she decides to start her troublesome endeavor to achieve her goal, depending on two main things. The first is completing her studies and looking for a job and the second is filing a case against her husband. Her husband then accuses her of insanity, and asks her about the reason for her request.

She replies, "I feel I have not led a normal marital life, as you were not giving me the least attention."

He asks, "Why did you endure it for twenty years?"

She answers, "For the sake of my son."

He says, "There must be a second man! "

none of them presented a positive image of women. However, I labeled some of the movies which were mainly concerned with discussing any of women's issues regardless of proposing solutions as the movies of cry. I chose those movies which showed serious concern in the woman and disregarded those which presented the typical image of the woman and those which dealt with her merely as a female. The movies I chose and analyzed are:

- 1- Ureed Halan (I am seeking a solution) 1975, directed by Said Marzuq.
- 2- Wa la Aza Lis-Saydat (No Consolation for Women) 1979, directed by Henry Barakat.
- 3- Ahlam Hend wa Kamilia (Dreams of Hend and Kamilia), 1988, directed by Mahammad Khan.
- 4- Zawgat Ragul Muhim (The Wife of an Important Man), 1988, directed by Mahammad Khan.
- 5- Yom Morr... Yom Helw (A Bitter Day ... a Sweet Day), 1988, directed by Khairi Bishara.
- 6- Ya Donia Ya Gharami (O life You are My Love), 1996, directed by Magdy Ahmad Ali.
- 7- Asrar Al-Banat (Secrets of Girls), 2001, directed by Magdy Ahmad Ali.
- 8- Sahar Al-Layali (Restless Nights), directed by Hany Khalifa.
- 9- Ahla Al-Awqat (The Nicest Times), 2004, directed by Hala Khalil.

The Movies of Cry (The Movies of Question)

(*) By Dr. Sahar Farag

Although hundreds of movies were produced concerning woman and her struggle against man's oppression, none of those movies presented the woman's issues or even the aspects of her humanity or her female identity in an efficient way. Most authors used to present her as a negative, helpless character, who is unable to protect herself or express her attitude, and who eventually surrenders to despair and anguish. Fatin Hamama played this role in a large number of movies, and surely we still remember her roles in Tareeq Al-Amal (the Way of Hope), Al-Malak Az-Zalim (the Unjust Angel), At-Treeq Al-Masdud (the Blocked Way), Az-Zawga Al-Azra (the Virgin Wife), and many others.

The scene of a girl or a woman committing suicide remained, for a long time, a familiar scene in most movies, expressing woman's helplessness and submission after despairing of life, with the savior, usually the man, managing to save her at the last moment. Through studying and analyzing a large number of movies, I found out that

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